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Czechoslovakia Next

When Hitler seized Austria, it was believed that Czechoslovakia would be the next object of his attention. Opinion was general among the experts, however, that many months would elapse before he was ready to strike. Today it looks as though the experts were wrong. In a speech on April 24, Konrad Henlein, leader of the Sudeten Germans, who is, of course, Hitler's mouthpiece, gave a virtual ultimatum to the Prague government. He demanded full equality and autonomy for Czech citizens of German blood. He virtually asked a repudiation of Czechoslovakia's present alliances with France and Soviet Russia. He told the Czechs they must no longer resist Germany's *Drang nach Osten*—her drive toward the East. In short, he told Czechoslovakia that she must surrender abjectly to Germany, on the plain threat that if she does not she will be destroyed.

The Prague government has of course responded to this by refusing the Hitler-Henlein terms. But the Czechs are whistling in the dark. Soviet Russia has indicated that, in accordance with the agreement, she will not aid Czechoslovakia unless France does so. France is only the tail to the British kite. What will Britain do? Chamberlain, in his recent speech, said in effect that his government might or might not aid Czechoslovakia and that Hitler had better be careful. Der Führer, looking at the Anglo-Italian agreement, knowing that England is now eager to make a similar agreement with himself, has apparently decided that the Chamberlain government will do nothing. The fate of Czechoslovakia will therefore probably be dependent upon the reaction of Great Britain and France to the Henlein speech.

Spain and the Roosevelt Quarantine

In spite of continued advances by the Spanish Rebels, government forces are still putting up a stiff resistance. It becomes increasingly clear that their morale has survived the blow of the Fascist victory in driving to the sea and severing connections between Barcelona and Valencia. If the Loyalists could achieve arms equality with their opponents they might even yet turn the tide. In view of this situation it is peculiarly discouraging that President Roosevelt, in a press conference, has opposed revision of neutrality legislation to permit export of arms to Spain. His argument seems to us completely disingenuous, on a number of grounds. If he is really concerned to retain the Neutrality Act and make it effective, why does he not invoke it in the Far East, where a state of war certainly exists? Furthermore, the embargo on Spain was not necessitated by this law, which originally contained no reference to civil wars. It was imposed as a result of a request by the President himself for a special congressional resolution, which was passed at his demand. Only after the Spanish embargo was decreed was the clause applying the Neutrality Act to civil war inserted in the law. Both this and the special resolution can now be repealed without hampering the application of the act to a general or international war. Mr. Roosevelt's further comment, that a lifting of the embargo would enable Franco as well as the Loyalists to buy arms here, is

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beside the point. Franco is already well supplied by Germany and Italy, while the "democratic" powers have been enforcing the "non-intervention" against themselves. The President in his Chicago speech called for quarantining aggressors, but the only quarantine he now sanctions is that against a victim of aggression.

New York Rewrites Its Constitution

New York State is in the throes of another Constitutional Convention, the eighth in its history. Little has been accomplished by any of the earlier ones, and there is no reason to believe that this will be an exception. The chief reason is that the Republicans, who obtained control of the convention largely through the accidental alignment in New York City, have butchered the convention to make a party holiday. Not only have they relegated the Democrats to a comparatively insignificant role, but they have pointedly ignored nearly all the distinguished men, experts in this subject, whom they might have consulted, calling instead upon old, familiar party hacks who know nothing about good government and wouldn't like it if they ever met any. The New York State division of the National Municipal League conferred a few days ago at Schenectady and suggested some excellent leads for the Constitutional Convention. It proposed a unicameral legislature, proportional representation and easy amendment of the State Constitution by petition. It asked a wide degree of home rule for cities, and a provision that the state could not pass special laws laying a burden on one community while others are exempt. (New York City, for example, must pay the cost of an expensive and useless Transit Commission saddled upon it by the State Legislature as a bit of political patronage.) New York's Republicans have always been venal and reactionary, and thus far, the Constitutional Convention shows no sign that they have changed their ways.

Congress Balks Again

The disingenuousness of those who formerly said that while they favored national minimum-wage and maximum-hour legislation, they unfortunately could not support it, first on the ground that it was unconstitutional and second on the ground that organized labor could not agree on the kind of measure desired, is now completely exposed. Such a law is now, by decision of the Supreme Court, clearly within the powers of Congress. A bill has been introduced which has the support of both the A. F. of L. and the CIO. Nevertheless it probably will not be passed in this session of Congress. It is being held up, just as its predecessor was, by failure of the all-powerful Rules Committee to provide for a vote on the question in the House of Representatives. The chairman of this committee is Representative O'Connor of New York, a reactionary Tammanyite. Other votes on the committee are cast by Southern Democrats, who do not want a national minimum that will erase the competitive advantage Southern employers enjoy in sweating labor—even though the minimum now proposed is a low one. Northern Republicans on the committee might join with Democratic liberals to overturn the chairman—but Republicans are no more likely to live up to campaign promises than Democrats, where employers' interests are at stake. We shall probably have to live through another period of wages sunk far below any possible subsistence level by depression competition before any legislative remedy is enacted.

Two to Make a Rumor

Among the multitude of "inside story" hints and whispers of recent coinage has been the charge that the plans for the La Follette Civil Liberties Committee investigation into the labor-spy racket were formulated at a secret meeting, attended by Communists, including Earl Browder. Confession and substantiation of the charge, according to the rumor, could be found in an article published in Fight, the magazine of the American League for Peace and Democracy. The clear implication was that the La Follette investigation is not a legitimate function of government at all but simply a Communist plot designed to splatter the reputations of a lot of patriotic and well meaning employers. Now the truth of the matter is out. The meeting at which the La Follette investigation was born was not attended by Communists. Moreover, the source of the rumor has been exposed as the organization called the Silver Shirts, one of America's most famous, if ineffectual, fascist organizations. There are at least two questions about this episode that need answering. In the first place why are the Silver Shirts so actively interested in discrediting the work of the La Follette committee? Have they a record that they are trying to keep dark? And in the second place, where was the healthy skepticism of the Congressmen who bothered to listen to misinformation from so unreliable a source?

Ask the Man Who Is One

Are the people on relief getting as much as they should? That question has been asked a scientific sampling of people in the United States by Dr. George Gallup's Institute of Public Opinion poll. Nearly three out of every four voters, 71 percent to be exact, replied that in their opinion the unemployed are getting enough relief. The vote sharply illustrates one of the most imposing problems facing those who are working to raise the low relief standards in this country. Public opinion continues either ignorant or apathetic about the desperate need for food, clothing and shelter while the unemployment rolls grow and the depression lengthens. Subconsciously we feel we can solve the problem by turning away from it, by accusing the jobless of improvidence or by repeating the latest gag about the WPA worker resting on his shovel. While

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public opinion registers strongly against increases in relief, all the fact-finding surveys, such as the one conducted last month by the American Association of Social Workers, have reported subhuman conditions in the homes of many of the unemployed. It is interesting to note that 75 percent of the people on relief who voted in the Institute of Public Opinion poll said that public assistance is insufficient. Who knows better than they?

Fair Play for the Indian

The American Indian has never fared so well as under the Roosevelt administration. After many years of exploitation and mistreatment, he is now for the first time looked upon as a human being, and allowed to continue to be an Indian, instead of being regarded as a retrograde and in fact half-criminal white man. He is encouraged in the communal living that is native to him, and is no longer forced into the artificial and obnoxious white-man pattern of one Indian, one farm —a scheme too often used merely as a device to get his land away from him. While this is true of the present administration as a whole, not everyone in Congress has supported such a just and generous policy. We have recently seen another determined assault on the welfare of the Indians, in the form of an effort to cut funds to an unreasonable degree—unreasonable, that is, unless one wants to help Western farmers, stockmen and others to steal more Indian land. While the appropriation bill has not yet become law, as these lines are written, a determined struggle by the friends of the Indian has apparently averted the danger—at least for this year.

Hague Is at It Again

It's an old story now that there is no freedom of speech in Jersey City for anybody except Mayor Hague and his henchmen. New proof of this came a few days ago when James F. Burkitt tried to hold a public meeting. Burkitt, long a political enemy of Hague, sought a permit to speak, was refused one, and went ahead anyhow. He was promptly arrested on a charge of uttering obscene language. Six of Hague's policemen swore he had done so, twelve disinterested spectators swore he had not. Judge Anthony Botti heard the case. He resolved every doubt in favor of the prosecution and promptly sentenced Burkitt to the unprecedented term of six months in prison. The whole affair was a travesty on justice; but Mayor Hague and his friends are very fond of travesties.

News Notes of a Week

Great Britain and Ireland signed a three-year agreement covering the vexed questions of tariff relations and military defense. . . . In China, neither side gained any conspicuous military advantage; pressure of the war continued to create serious difficulties at home for the Japanese government. . . . France moved toward an agreement with Italy paralleling the Anglo-Italian understanding. French finance continued to give grave concern. A closer understanding between France and Great Britain was previsaged as a result of the visit of French officials to London. . . . The anti-religious campaign was revived in Soviet Russia. . . . Another grim sign of Germany's war preparations was seen when the state confiscated all iron fences around private property.

At home, unrest among automobile workers in Michigan was demonstrated in several ways. Members of the UAW protested against the tactics of the Buick and Chevrolet divisions of General Motors, charging discriminatory dismissals and efforts to cut the union wage scales. . . . Turmoil in Pennsylvania politics increased with the admission of Governor Earle, candidate for the Democratic senatorial nomination, that he had borrowed $30,000 from Matthew McCloskey, a wealthy contractor handling many state jobs. . . . A British mission arrived in this country to buy military airplanes, and many other countries were said to have placed orders for various types of material here, or to be on the point of doing so. . . . A large and so far as we can see unnecessary fuss was being made over the fact that Henry Ford had been asked to lunch at the White House.

Storm Over Taxes

NO MORE DETERMINED DRIVE has been made by business interests during the past year than that to remove the tax on undistributed profits. The reason assigned is that this tax has helped depression and prevented revival, by penalizing corporations for building up and investing surplus. So strong has been this pressure that the Senate, in rewriting the tax bill, abandoned the graduated rates on undistributed profits altogether, and the House sharply reduced them.

We doubt if either the average citizen, the ordinary business man, or even the Representative and Senator, could go far to prove the case against this tax. We certainly have seen nothing in the way of substantial evidence as to what its effects have been. The propaganda against it has consisted chiefly of reiterated assertion and opinion. But as far as theory is concerned, the campaign gives a distorted picture.

The allegation is that the tax prevents investment, by encouraging the distribution of profits instead of their accumulation and reinvestment by the corporation making them. This allegation does not explain why stockholders receiving the profits as dividends do not reinvest the money. Our banks and financial institutions are bursting with idle money; there is no lack of savings. What is lacking is the will to invest them.

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The attack on the tax also overlooks its reason for being. Money paid out to stockholders, or money made by individuals or partnerships, is subject to income surtaxes at progressive rates. But money left in corporate surplus, before this tax was enacted, escaped progressive rates altogether. This fact constituted a great loophole in the income-tax system and was inequitable. How, if the tax is repealed, is tax avoidance by this route to be stopped?

There is little doubt that smaller corporations, which have difficulty in floating security issues or can do so only at great expense, are hampered by the tax, and it is just to make an exception in their favor. It may also be just and wise to allow exemptions where profits are used to pay off debts or to balance against recent deficits. But all that could be done without abandoning the principle of the tax.

Suppose, however, the critics are right, and the tax does discourage a large amount of new investment out of surplus profits. If so, the opposite is also true—that absence of the tax encourages investment out of surplus profits. In that case, the fact that taxes could formerly be escaped by leaving profits in corporate surpluses placed a premium on reinvestment. Is that necessarily a good thing? It is true that just now the economic system needs more investment of new capital than it is enjoying; but was this true in 1928 and 1929? There are times when public policy ought to encourage more distribution of profits rather than less. People who object to the surplus-profits tax because it represents taxation for reform rather than for revenue ought to object to its repeal on exactly the same grounds. Both are policy-making kinds of taxation. If what is wanted is a neutral tax system, without any effect on investment policies, something far more drastic will have to be done. A suggestion of this kind, made by Professor Harold M. Groves in The New Republic of January 17, 1938, was that stockholders be compelled to reckon as income, for tax purposes, undistributed as well as distributed profits of the corporations in which they hold shares.

It appears that the drastic modification of the tax which is likely to result from congressional action is a response to business pressure and little else. If revival is not due on other grounds, this change will not bring it. If revival is due, it would have come anyway. The issue is largely a false one; the agitation against the tax was, for the most part, an expression of the age-old desire to escape taxation, using the existing depression as a heaven-sent argument.

Far more to the point are other changes in the law, as suggested by the President. Reluctance to invest in business enterprises is certainly increased by the existence of a large volume of tax-exempt government securities, supplying a refuge for the funds of those who would otherwise have to pay more to the Collector of Internal Revenue. Closing of this loophole would certainly do something to stimulate a more productive use of funds. Also there is no good reason for the exemption of the salaries of those in public employment. To include them in the system would boost the revenue, and becomes increasingly important as the proportion of those engaged in governmental services increases.

The fact that Congress seems to be apathetic concerning these new recommendations, and may do nothing about them before the next session, is an additional commentary on the influence which organized business propaganda is exerting, regardless of the merits of the issue. No powerful lobbies are at work to end tax-exempt bonds or to tax civil servants. Therefore these measures, about which there is little reasonable question, are neglected while the surplus-profits tax commands the major attention of Congress. It is true that doubts have been raised about constitutional power to tax the security issues of states and localities. We incline to agree with the President that a new measure of the sort would be upheld by the Supreme Court. Nevertheless, there is no reason in the world for Congress to postpone action on account of this dispute. If those who think a constitutional amendment is necessary are in the majority, why do they not pass it at this session, so that its ratification may be begun at the earliest possible moment?

A Third Party in 1940?

THE ELECTION OF 1940 suddenly got into the headlines a few days ago. Both Senator Robert La Follette of Wisconsin and his brother Philip, Governor of that state, made radio addresses sharply criticizing President Roosevelt's policies, and blaming the present depression in large part on them. Governor La Follette, in particular, made a series of four radio addresses to be followed by a mass meeting of progressive-minded citizens from Wisconsin and other states. This mass meeting took place after this issue of The New Republic had gone to press, but advance indications left little doubt that at it the question would be raised in vigorous fashion whether there should not be a new party in the field in 1940, with a platform upon which all progressives could agree, a platform much farther to the left than anything the Democrats could bring themselves to endorse.

That the criticisms of President Roosevelt made by the Messrs. La Follette have much merit, the editors of The New Republic are prompt to agree. Many of these criticisms have been repeated in our columns frequently, ever since Mr. Roosevelt took office. To say this is not the same, however, as saying that it is now clear that a third party should and must be formed before the 1940 election. There are still several factors that need to be cleared up.

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One of these is the division in the ranks of labor. Such a third party as would interest the La Follettes, or ourselves, would have to be of such a character as to merit the support of organized labor; it could not possibly be effective unless it did. Yet at present, we see the American labor movement split down the middle, with about 4,000,000 union members owing allegiance to the CIO and roughly a similar number supporting the A. F. of L. An omen of what might happen can be seen in the recent municipal elections in Detroit and Seattle, where rank and file members of the A. F. of L. voted for a conservative candidate in order to ensure the defeat of one who had the support of the CIO.

What is true of labor is true of liberals in general. They are more sharply divided now than they have been in many years. The issue of Stalinism versus Trotskyism might seem comparatively academic so far as the United States is concerned, but this is not true in practice. Another reason for division, at least at present, not unconnected with the matter of Soviet Russia, is the dispute over "collective security" v. "isolation."

Another problem for any new party in 1940, and one that is serious for existing minority groups, is how to get on the ballot at all. Each state makes its own requirements, and some of these are onerous. In certain states, for example, no party can participate in any election unless it polled a certain number of votes, or a certain percentage of the electorate, at the last preceding general election. This would seem to rule out a new party altogether, though it can usually be circumvented by combining forces with some existing small group. In other states a new party has to obtain a large number of signatures on a petition before it can become a legal entity. Since the officials who scrutinize the signatures on these petitions are themselves loyal members of one of the old parties, both the opportunity and the wish to strangle the child in the cradle are obvious.

More important than any of these, in considering prospects for 1940, is the question of Mr. Roosevelt's intentions and acts. It seems to us extremely unlikely that he will himself become a candidate for a third term—so unlikely that we propose to leave this possibility out of the discussion. We are confident, however, that he will want to name the Democratic candidate, and with all the power of the federal machine behind him, plus his own prestige with the masses of the people, we see no reason to doubt that he will be able to do so. His choice, in our judgment, will be a one-hundred-percent New Deal Democrat, of the type of Solicitor General Robert H. Jackson. If this happens, the division between Democrats and Republicans will come closer to being a true alignment of conservatives and liberals than at any time for generations. Certainly, many conservative Democrats, even in the South, would break the party lines and vote for some such fellow conservative as Senator Arthur H. Vandenberg, running for the Republicans.

In such a case, we should have the liberals' dilemma of 1936 all over again. They will be told that this is no time for a protest vote, when a protest can throw the election to the conservatives. They will be told that a fairly good candidate who can be elected is better than a perfect candidate who cannot. They will be assured that half a loaf is better than no bread. These arguments would undoubtedly be persuasive with many thousands of individuals on the left. Conspicuous among them would be the Communist Party, which has now studied the lessons of opportunism and practical compromise to such good effect that it will not vote for any presidential candidate unless there is a good chance that he will win.

In the light of these facts, it is obviously too early to say whether a third party will be either desirable or necessary in the 1940 election. The key, as we have indicated, is to be found in how Mr. Roosevelt comports himself during the remaining thirty-two months of his term. Of late, he has been far less vigorous in seeking to push his policies than before. If he is content to become "the prisoner of the White House" and to let the Southern conservatives recapture control of the Democratic Party, then a new grouping based solidly on the desires of labor and the farmers, and not primarily upon the benevolent impulses of a well-to-do country squire, will be a necessity for our national health.

From a Moscow Observer

THE NEW REPUBLIC has received from a correspondent in Moscow, who attended the recent trials, an interesting theory to explain what has seemed to many Americans inexplicable. He believes that "by and large the accusations are well founded and the accused guilty." But why did they do such things? We quote from his letter:

"In the first place, we can dispose of at least half of the defendants by saying that they were blackmailed, like Zelensky, or dragged in by their chiefs who were already in, like Khodjayev.

"We are left with Bukharin, Rykov, Yagoda, Rakovsky, Krestinsky and others. There is one short remark made by Rakovsky in the trial, and later cut out of the stenogram, and out of the Soviet press, which goes a long way in answering the question with regard to those who went in with open eyes. 'When adventurers are successful, they are called great statesmen.' This is more than a not-very-subtle thrust at Stalin.

"In military science, and in politics, you engage consistently in the temporary utilization of hostile elements, thinking, of course, that you are getting the best

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of the deal. This is the adventurism of which Rakovsky spoke, which is justified only in terms of success.

"Since the formation of the Bolshevik Party, and the establishment of the general rule, 'No discussion after a decision has been made; the minority must help carry out the will of the majority,' the set-up for politicians has become much more complicated. It became very difficult for any minority to function. Its only means was underground action. In this bitter struggle anything was fair.

"In the case of the Trotskyite opposition the struggle started over several basic questions, such as the role of the peasantry and the theory of permanent revolution. In addition to this the Trotskyites acquired a tremendous personal dislike for Stalin. The struggle went on, both sides fighting with fair means or foul.

"What we have been saying about the Trotsky opposition goes just as well for the Bukharin opposition. Bukharin disagreed with the majority of the Central Committee on certain points. What was he to do? In England or America, he might have started a newspaper, hired a hall, made speeches, run for Parliament, and perhaps won his point. In the Soviet Union that procedure is impossible. He had to take his choice—give in, follow the decision of the majority even though he was convinced it was incorrect, or else fight it out underground.

"Bukharin chose to fight it out, and in doing so he made certain alliances, with the Trotskyites, with certain Mensheviks and, finally, with the Gestapo and the British Intelligence Service. A united front—for the overthrow of the Stalinist regime. In order to get the support of the Gestapo, it was necessary to make certain promises. Bukharin made them, only because it was necessary, and not expecting, probably, ever to carry them out.

"And so, revolutionaries of thirty years' standing became spies, traitors and murderers. The process is logical, and inherent in the whole picture of Russia during the last thirty years.

"Having become spies and wreckers, they get arrested and come to trial. The second question arises: 'Why do they confess?'

"It is again necessary to divide the defendants up into groups. The Zelenskys and Khodjayevs, who were dragged into the conspiracy without any elaborate ideological basis and committed their crimes because there was nothing else they could do, these men confess because they are really penitent. They have seen the error of their ways, and were broken down by the very clever cross-questioning of the NKVD. They admit the juiciest crimes, probably sometimes even leaving out things which might partly vindicate them, because they hope in this way to get a more lenient sentence, because they hope to keep their families out of trouble, because they really think that it is the only thing for them to do as erring and penitent Bolsheviks. The habit factor probably enters in also; they have been repeating these confessions, in various forms, for months in jail.

"We are left with the Bukharins and Rykovs, the Krestinskys, Yagodas and Rakovskys, the Chernovs and Bessonovs. These men, in the opinion of your correspondent, are not repentant. They think they were right, they think they could have done a better job than Stalin, they never confess any more than they know the prosecution knows. Kamenev and Zinoviev three times 'confessed,' each time bringing out new facts.

"These men are interested in not getting shot, if possible; they are interested in their families. But more than anything else they are interested in carrying on the fight.

"The most effective means of fighting that they have is to confess—and to do it so profusely that it will create the impression, abroad at least, that the trials are a straight frame-up. In doing this they utilize their own knowledge and experience, and often are a couple of jumps ahead of Vishinsky and Ulrich. Furthermore they utilize the lack of information, and the muscle-bound organization of the NKVD (which, in the opinion of your correspondent, is usually overrated as an efficient, even infallible organization)."

It will be noted that this report tends to confirm our position that the accused were probably guilty, though not of everything charged, and that the major part of the tragedy need not have happened if a legal opposition had been permitted. To us this seems a more credible thesis than the official Communist one that all the culprits were traitors or spies from the earliest days of the revolution, that the trial and executions merely strengthen the Soviet Union, and that no true friend of the Russian people need have any regrets concerning what has happened.

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Editors

BRUCE BLIVEN MALCOLM COWLEY R. M. LOVETT
GEORGE SOULE STARK YOUNG

Assistant Editors: OTIS FERGUSON ELIZABETH HULING

Contributing Editors

H. N. BRAILSFORD HEYWOOD BROUN JOHN T. FLYNN
WALDO FRANK E. C. LINDEMAN W. P. MANGOLD
JON. MITCHELL LEWIS MUMFORD R. G. TUGWELL

Treasurer: DANIEL MEBANE

E. G. WOOD, *Advertising Manager* BYRON DEXTER, *Circulation Manager*

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Mussolini Appoints a Successor

WHEN THE ANGLO-ITALIAN AGREEMENT was signed in Rome on April 16, strange sounds were heard in the streets of the ancient city. The correspondent of The New York Times described them: "While the signing of the documents proceeded, a staccato chant of 'Ciano, Ciano, Ciano!' raised by a considerable crowd gathered in the Piazza outside and the neighboring streets, floated through the windows, it being the first time that this cry had taken precedence in Rome over the more usual one of 'Duce, Duce, Duce!'"

The Times correspondent was right in calling attention to this historic episode. The man who was thus cheered is the one whom, beyond doubt, Mussolini has chosen to succeed himself as dictator of the Italian Empire. After fourteen years of premiership and twelve of dictatorship, Mussolini is growing old. Though he still thinks and acts with the juvenile brightness that has always made him so popular among dynamic Americans, and though he thinks neither of retiring nor of dying, he is beginning to plan for his succession.

The successor has been both found and launched. He is the young Foreign Minister, Count Galeazzo Ciano, bred for his post with great care, delicately nurtured through newspaper work, diplomatic service and marriage. The young man who will one day assume the important role of Duce del Fascismo was born in Leghorn in 1904, son of Costanzo Ciano, a national hero both in war and in peace, who defeated the Austrians on the Adriatic and the seamen's unions on the Tyrrenian waterfront, earning in this manner his eleven-year post of Secretary of Transportation.

Son of a father admiral and patriot, son of the man personally responsible for the Italian trains running on schedule, young Ciano grew up in a manner befitting the offspring of the new Fascist autocracy—local college, law school in Rome, two plays (on which all comment has been forbidden), a newspaper, and finally the diplomatic-service examination, which, according to the newspapers, was very brilliantly passed. Incidentally, the examination had been postponed four months in order to allow Ciano to finish law school.

The experiment in journalism, during which young Ciano covered pages of secondary newspapers with harmless prose, provided his first contact with public opinion. In this way he was able to win the friendship of his fellow newspapermen before cloistering himself in the ivory tower of foreign policy. The time spent in Rio de Janeiro and in Rome advanced his career quickly and smoothly. Diplomatic service is the means through which the Italian plutocracy breaks through the lines of the old and decadent aristocracy. Young Ciano took his place among the diplomats as the most genuine product of the "revolution," since he alone represented the second generation of Fascism.

His marriage to Mussolini's daughter saw him a Count. His father had been given a title with the predicate of Cortellazzo (the scene of one of his wartime exploits) in order to give the Duce's daughter the pleasure of being a countess. Edda Mussolini's marriage presented a very delicate problem, inasmuch as Mussolini was unwilling to put his petit-bourgeois family (a large part of which has always been kept in the dark) in direct contact with the great houses of the old aristocracy. Neither did he wish a bourgeois marriage out of keeping with his position and with his daughter's ambitions.

Young Ciano, who up to then had had an easy life as son of his father, found life even easier as son-in-law of his father-in-law. Minister in Shanghai after a career in the diplomatic service not unlike that of the Prince of Wales in the British navy, he came back to Rome more of a power than ever. He went to the Monetary Conference of London in 1933 as a simple consul general; that is, as one of the lesser lights of the Italian commission. But the servility of the other members put him in first place, and for the first time, in the limelight of world affairs.

From that occasion he ceased being merely a diplomat, a son of his father and a son-in-law of his father-in-law. He came to be slated more or less openly as The Successor. He was next appointed chief of the Press Bureau of the Head of the Government (Ufficio Stampa del Capo del Governo), that is, virtually the dictator of the Italian press. Soon the Press Bureau became the Under-Ministry of Press and Propaganda, and finally a full Ministry.

Then the Ethiopian war came, and young Ciano, as a captain of the Royal Air Force, went to town. The entire Italian press was mobilized for his service. Beside their unbelievable flights of rhetoric over the heroism of "the young eagle," newspapers carefully reprinted under the title "American Enthusiasm" the lyrics which pro-Fascist Italian correspondents sent to American newspapers.

Ciano returned to Rome a conquering hero. If Mussolini won the war, Ciano fought it. His father, confined to the post of President of the moribund Chamber, was put in the shade for ever. The son became the First Man of Italy, after, of course, Mussolini.

His "achievements" in diplomacy made him an ideal Foreign Minister. His recent trips to Berlin, Vienna and Budapest, hailed by the Italian press as brilliant triumphs in the face of overwhelming diplomatic odds,

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confirmed his role of vice-Duce and Successor. The rapidity of his rise and the tone in which the Italian press speaks of him are such that there can be no doubt of Mussolini's plans for him. No other man but Il Duce has ever had such a large space in headlines or so many pictures on the front page. When Ciano gave a lecture in Milan, the Corriere della Sera gave him screaming headlines, while in the same edition a similar act on the part of the King was confined to the lower-right-hand corner.

The career of the young Ciano is a clear indication of the influence that Edda Mussolini, Countess Ciano, has over her father. To be the wife of the Foreign Minister makes her the leader of the Italian social life, where formerly she was only tolerated. It also permits her husband to enjoy a real political role, since foreign policy is the only policy existing in Italy.

For the post of Foreign Minister, vacant since 1932, there were several candidates. The Deputy Polverelli, ousted by Ciano from the Press Bureau, had the post practically promised in the official communiqué announcing his "resignation." Also longing for it were Under-secretary (now Ambassador to the United States) Fulvio Suvich, Piero Parini, head of Italians Abroad (Fasci Italiani all' Estero) and Dino Grandi, still sentimentally attached to his bygone glory. The young outsider got not only the post but also an unprecedented amount of publicity along with it.

Mussolini, who recently added the title of "Founder of the Empire" to the title of "Duce," has obviously a great desire to perpetuate his glory within his own family. The death of his brother Arnaldo left him utterly lonely, as is plainly shown in the biography which he wrote in his brother's memory. His sons, Bruno and Vittorio, who attended the swanky Liceo Tasso in Rome without difficulties and without honors, are, it is believed, a keen disappointment to their father. Bruno, the younger, is entered in the Royal Air Force, and the elder, Vittorio, writer of movie articles and former Tasso soccer-team star, made a thoroughly bourgeois and unimportant marriage. The very fact that he was allowed a marriage of love is reason to suspect that politics will not be his field. Edda, oldest and willful favorite child, is collecting the imperial heritage through her husband.

Further and more important, fascism needs men. All the posts distributed after the March on Rome are, in spite of many changes, still in the hands of the old-timers. Of all the hierarchs of Fascism, Ciano is, aside from his own Under-secretary Bastianini, the only man under forty. He is also the only one who entered politics after the "Revolution." And Fascism, or rather, Mussolini, needs not only men but young men. Fascism is emphasized as a movement of youth. "Youth, Youth, Springtime of Life" is its anthem, but Fascists are unmistakably growing old. All the democracies, ironically characterized by the Italian press as "gerontocracies," have staffs made up of younger men than Fascism has. Mussolini himself, besides riding horseback and drinking fruit juice, employs the Voronov system of silence; it is forbidden to mention the age of Mussolini, forbidden to mention his birthday, forbidden to mention the children of the Cianos. Mussolini, who talks with such pride of fatherhood, is silent on the subject of grandfatherhood.

Dante says that political genius is rarely transmitted from father to son. We might add that still more rarely is it transmitted from father-in-law to son-in-law. Mussolini is another Cromwell with an Edda instead of a Richard, and he is trying to create a succession through her.

Mussolini wished to reign as a despot; he surrounded himself not with councillors but with servants, not with critics but with sycophants. He thinks he is Caesar; he is Caligula. He may believe in his revolution, but his followers believe only in the spoils distributed by the new regime. Now that he is growing old, he has no one to depend on but his daughter; he finds no one interested in his personal work outside his own family. Mussolini, fearing competition and jealous of his position, banned intelligence from his political world. Starace, Giuriati, Baistrocchi, General Valle, Baron Aloisi and a number of others were given their positions because of their servility and their lack of strong qualities. Now that the time has come when he needs wisdom and stability, he can find them only by following the sole human element of his personality: his love for Edda.

Thus Ciano's position is the result of a chain of circumstances wholly outside himself. It happened that he was the one chosen by Edda Mussolini, but it might just as easily have been anyone else. Ciano is not stupid, not ignorant, not bad, not unprepared, but he is in a situation which he did not reach through any skill or work on his part.

Heirs to the throne are bred for their post, and they believe in their missions; and when they do not they give up the job. Ciano, although lacking that important element of faith which makes a success of a successor, likes his post and thinks that if he is not the fittest, at least he is as fit as anyone else. And here he is wrong. The Fascist politicians who rose high at least did something to reach their posts, even if what they did was not ethical or honest. Grandi reached the Court of St. James and a title through bloody gangsterism and self-discipline. Balbo became air marshal through crimes of violence, but also through a good deal of hard and dangerous work in the Air Force. All that Ciano did to become The Successor was to effect a lucky marriage. He is slated as Successor because he is the only man whom Mussolini could trust among 44,000,000 Italians, and to find him, Il Duce had to look within his own family.

EMIL WOLFF

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Stalemate on the Grand Canal

"ENFORCEMENT SEEMS DIFFICULT," admitted Admiral Nobumasa Suyetsugu, of the Imperial Japanese Cabinet, in his press interview of April 21, "of the government's unchangeable policy of obtaining a pro-Japanese regime in China." To this state of sobriety have the military events of the past month brought Japanese official opinion after almost a year of continental warfare against a foe who does not seem to know when he is beaten. Japanese Foreign Office spokesmen for years had never wearied of telling the world that Japan alone understood the Chinese people and must, therefore, be left to deal with them in her own way. A faint glimmer of suspicion that this understanding may not have been so complete as advertised seems by now to be penetrating even to the august precincts of the Imperial Palace.

For, while the Japanese General Staff proceeded upon a brilliant plan, brilliantly executed by the commanders in the field—up to a certain point, as we shall see—and while their expectations with regard to the progress of their own forces have been completely realized—again up to a certain point—their preconceptions of the effect of these operations on the Chinese have proved wholly erroneous. They committed the cardinal military error of underestimating their opponent. For errors of this sort, the inexorable laws of war always demand a heavy price—a price which the Japanese army is now paying, in blood and in lost prestige.

Underlying all diplomacy, all foreign policy—and especially those phases of foreign policy which seek expansion of national power—are strategical factors. The principal strategical factor affecting Japanese policy in East Asia is the existence of the fortress of Vladivostok, backed by the Soviet Far Eastern Army, and by the Soviet air and submarine squadrons. Japanese military men have been wont to refer to Vladivostok as a pistol pointed at the heart of Japan; in the decade between the Chino-Japanese war of 1894-95 and the Russo-Japanese war they used the same term with regard to Korea and Port Arthur. When the time was ripe they wrenched the latter pistols from the Russian hand by force; they will never rest easy until Vladivostok and the Maritime Province are also theirs, and the Sea of Japan is at last a Japanese lake. Meanwhile the Russian army along the Ussuri and the Amur is an ever present threat to any Japanese advance in North China, to the Japanese possession of Manchukuo; and not only a military but a political threat. A Red China would write finis to every Japanese imperial hope.

Hence the primary strategical move contemplated by the Japanese was to thrust a wedge between Russia and China. This accomplished, Japan could consolidate her position, and then, when the next opportunity offered, turn upon the Russians in full force and drive them west of Lake Baikal. This done, they could absorb China at their leisure. But first Russia and China must be severed, must be rendered incapable of mutual support. It became necessary, then, for Japan to obtain military dominance of Chahar and Suiyuan, interposing thus between China proper and the Soviet-ruled Outer Mongolian People's Republic. Chahar and Suiyuan can be dominated from the eastward only by way of the Nankou Pass, mountains elsewhere impeding direct communication.

Dominance of the Nankou Pass in turn could be had only by occupying the North China Plain; and the limits of that plain are set by the mountains of Shansi on the west and the Yellow River on the south; here are the only practicable defensive positions which can be used by a military power who seeks to hold the North China Plain against pressure from the Yangtze Valley.

The Japanese plan, then, was one of limited and territorial objectives. It envisaged the swift movement of Japanese troops to the strategical and commercial heart of North China—the Tientsin-Peiping area—and swift expansion from that base along the railways toward the Yellow River and into Shansi. It was carried out with the dispatch of a German time-table operation; Chinese resistance was almost nonexistent. And as one phase of the plan Japanese troops and Mongol allies moved into Suiyuan, facing the frontier of Outer Mongolia.

In the very early stages of the operations, however, one disturbing factor appeared. The Chinese leader, Chiang Kai-shek, called on the people of China to resist to the end this Japanese aggression. Weather conditions in Manchukuo interrupted the dispatch of reinforcements to North China, and Chiang's troops were advancing from the southward against the Japanese base of operations in Hopei. It was necessary to create a diversion, and this was done by the landing at Shanghai, directly imperiling China's principal commercial port and beyond that, her capital. The diversion proved successful; Chiang hurled his German-trained battalions, the flower of his army, into battle to save Shanghai and Nanking, and the Japanese in the North, thus relieved, advanced to the Yellow River.

The Shanghai diversion, having served its purpose, was then liquidated by a flanking movement from Hangchow Bay, and the Japanese Southern army, splendidly equipped, moved forward from Shanghai in a series of swift turning movements against Nan-

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king. The fall of the capital, it was confidently assumed in Tokyo, would finally break the Chinese will to resist; Chiang would be overthrown, a pro-Japanese regime set up to negotiate a surrender that would extinguish forever the independence of the Chinese Republic, and Japan would emerge, after a short and victorious war, the overlord of all East Asia.

Up to this point the Japanese calculations had proved perfectly justified by events. But at this point they collapsed. For Chiang was not overthrown. Chinese resistance, instead of dying out, increased. Slowly, in the flames of war, a Chinese national spirit was being forged, tempered to a fine edge by hatred of Japan. To that tempering, the Japanese army contributed by a reign of murder and rape in Nanking that recalled the horrors of the sack of Magdeburg—save that it was not so soon spent.

It became necessary for the Japanese General Staff to review the situation and devise measures to meet it. They determined first of all to join their two occupied areas by simultaneous advances, south from the Yellow River and north from the Yangtze, along the Tientsin-Pukow Railway. These columns would meet in the vicinity of Suchow, where the Tsin-pu line crosses the east-west railway known as the Lunghai. Suchow gained, the Japanese could then drive westward along the Lunghai, coupled with a move southward along the Peiping-Hankow line, and take Chengchow, at the junction of the Peihan and Lunghai railways. This would cut off one of the two main Chinese supply routes, that from Russia via motor road to Sian and thence by rail to Chengchow-Hankow, to which latter point the Chinese capital had been removed. Meanwhile it became the task of Japanese naval aviation to interrupt the other supply line, the railway from the British port of Hong-Kong to Canton, and thence to Hankow.

Up to this point, the Japanese had been on the offensive, had retained the initiative and had been uniformly successful. Now, still on the offensive, they failed at all three points of their new drive. In the north they crossed the Yellow River at Tsinan, overran most of Shantung (aided by troops landed at Tsingtao, aided even more by the feeble resistance of Shantung's wavering governor, Han Fu Chu), but were halted dead at the Grand Canal, in the area Lini-Tsining, when they ran up against long prepared Chinese defensive positions, and against Chinese troops better provided with artillery and munitions than any they had previously encountered in the open field. In the south the Japanese troops who had sacked Nanking, still semi-mutinous, demoralized by weeks of debauchery, and—it is reliably reported—riddled by disease, moved very slowly, against increasing Chinese resistance, to the line of the Hwai River. Forcing the crossings of the Hwai, they were savagely attacked on both flanks and lost their momentum completely. For two months they have not advanced a yard beyond the positions they occupied in February, in the marshy lake country north of the Hwai.

The Japanese naval air force also failed. During ninety days of effort they interrupted traffic between Hong-Kong and Canton for just seven days in all, thousands of willing hands laboring by night to repair the damage done in the daytime. Not one of the several important bridges has been seriously hurt: an eloquent reply to the air enthusiasts who for years deafened the public ear with prophecies of bombs being dropped down the funnels of battleships and the like. The lesson here is a repetition of that in Spain: if you fly low enough to hit a small target, you are shot down, if you fly high enough to keep the anti-aircraft guns from hitting you your bombs find their target only by luck.

The Japanese advance was now at a complete standstill. And, in the vital Suchow area, a new phase of the war began as the initiative passed to the Chinese. For the first time, the Chinese seriously took the offensive. Crossing the Grand Canal in great force, they fell upon the Japanese in the area Hanchwang-Taierhchwang.

But, meanwhile, a new factor was at work. In Shansi and Hopei the long Japanese lines of communication were suffering increasing interruption from the operations of guerillas, trained and directed by the headquarters of the Eighth Route Army, formerly the Chinese Communist Army which, at the beginning of the war, had thrown aside its ancient enmity to Chiang and joined wholeheartedly in the defense of the national territory against the invader. Enjoying only sporadic and inconclusive successes during the earlier phases of the war, its operations had gradually spread, as its scattered group leaders organized, armed and trained the peasantry in its peculiar tactics. Now the reward of all this patient work was to be reaped.

The Japanese suddenly discovered that no railway station, no small detachment, no truck column was safe from one day's end to the rising of the next sun. Their long, poorly guarded lines of communication were again and again interrupted; whole sections of the Peiping-Hankow Railway, for example, were occupied for days at a time by the guerillas, and Japanese columns moving against these struck into thin air. The protection of the railway lines absorbed increasingly large numbers of troops. As the Japanese operations spread into Shantung, so did the guerilla warfare. And now, faced by the determined Chinese assault on their positions on the Grand Canal, the Japanese realized suddenly that their advanced divisions were in a position of real peril.

Desperately they resisted; but the guerillas swarmed down upon the railway between Tsinan and Yenchow,

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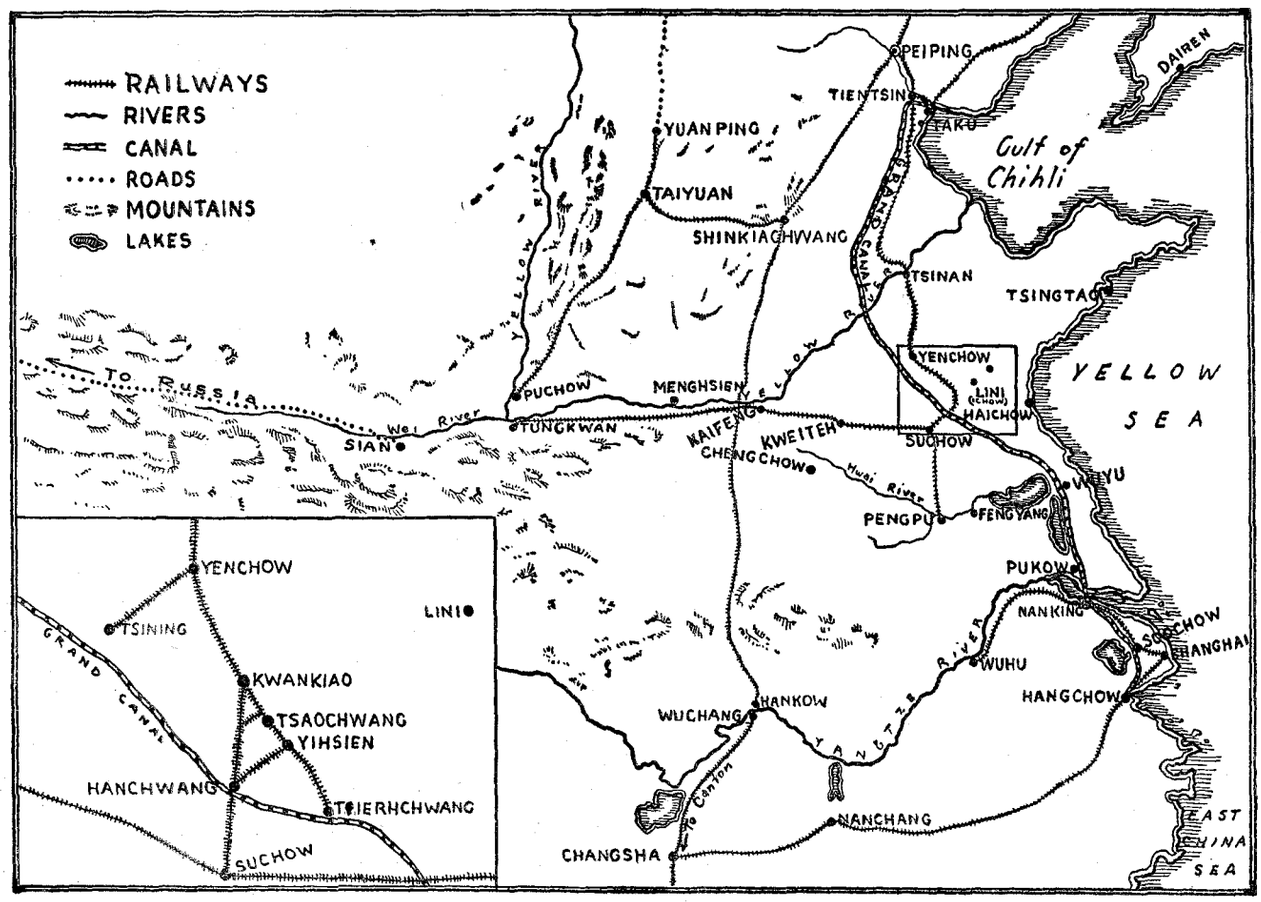
cutting it in no less than forty places within a period of about a week. As fast as it was repaired in one place it was cut in another. General Pai Chung-hsi, in immediate command of the Chinese attack, pushed out a flank guard to Lini, which battled savagely and successfully to hold off Japanese relieving forces coming from Tsingtao by road, while with his main force he surrounded Taierhchwang, and on the left another Kwangsi general, Li Tsung-jen, kept the Japanese fully occupied in defending Hanchwang and Tsining. Japanese losses mounted, Japanese supplies of ammunition and gasoline dwindled and died. Meanwhile, in Shansi, continuous Chinese local operations held Japanese troops fast, preventing the reinforcement of the threatened area. On April 7 the Chinese launched their final assault and Taierhchwang was theirs. The remnants of the beaten Japanese army fell sullenly back on Yihsien, leaving 40,000 dead and wounded behind them on the field and in the smoking ruins of the town.

Thus did the Imperial Japanese Army sustain its first major disaster in the history of modern Japan.

Yihsien was immediately beleaguered in its turn. At the moment of writing, it is still holding out.

The Japanese are collecting their forces for a great effort to redeem the situation and restore their impaired prestige. Fresh troops are moving southward—some from Manchukuo where, in fear of a Russian attack in the spring, the best units of the Japanese army had been concentrated. Others are coming from Shanghai by sea to Tsingtao, which means weakening the southern front at what may be a most inopportune time. Still others are being sent from Japan—which means, in view of the Japanese effort already put forth, that new classes of reservists are being called to the colors. Already Japanese pressure has increased at Lini, and that town has been wrested from Pai's stoutly fighting flank guard. In Japan itself a political crisis has resulted, and the military are clamoring for the imposition of the drastic National Mobilization Act, being resisted in this demand by Prince Konoye, the Premier, and by the civilian members of the Cabinet.

The initiative has for the moment passed again to Japan. How will the Imperial General Staff employ it? Perhaps in a new drive against Suchow, since by success in this area they could best regain their lost "face," so tremendously important in the Orient. A more dangerous move, it appears, would be an attempt to drive in the Chinese bridge-head defending Chengchow; the capture of this place would, as previously pointed out, cut the Chinese-Russian supply line, and would also put the Chinese armies in the Suchow area in a position of great peril, since it would cut their line of retreat on Hankow. But this would necessitate forcing a crossing of the Yellow River, an operation of no small difficulty in the face of a revitalized Chinese army inspired by the taste of victory. It is indeed in the growth of Chinese military spirit



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that the success at Taierhchwang may prove most valuable to the Chinese in the end. They have proven that they can beat the hitherto invincible Japanese in the open field. The legend of Japanese invincibility has been shattered. If it be not quickly restored, Taierhchwang may prove but the prelude to greater things. Indeed, it is a sword which cuts two ways; for though their defeat has been carefully hidden from the Japanese people, it cannot be hidden from the soldiers; and it has long been the belief of observers who have closely studied the Japanese military character that defeat, hitherto unknown to them, might not be sustained with fortitude.

The events of the next month in China should have far-reaching effects on the history not only of Eastern Asia, but of the world. The military caste of Japan stake their all on the outcome of the battles now in preparation. If they fail again, the repercussions of their failure will be felt not alone in Tokyo, but in Berlin and Rome. And even if they win, they can have little assurance now that their victory will be final. Their armies must still penetrate ever deeper into the vast continental area of China, prolonging their vulnerable lines of communication, prolonging the struggle which is already a heavy strain on Japan's not too extensive resources. The hope of quick and overwhelming victory has gone; in a struggle of endurance, the Chinese hopes grow brighter with every day that passes and finds them still resisting. And in the north, the enigma of the Russian and Mongolian armies broods along the Amur and in the far reaches of the Gobi, waiting and watching.

GEORGE FIELDING ELIOT

Mr. Dooley

WHEN I WAS ASKED the other day to write the introduction to a book of selections from "Mr. Dooley," my first thought was how my mother would have received such a piece of news. She would, I am sure, have considered me a combination of Aladdin and Shakespeare. Even to have known him was a greater honor than she thought I would ever have. But it is even harder for me to realize that I could be performing such a task; and when Mr. Dunne called me by my first name, which was at our first meeting, I went home on air; my hero, our household hero, had accepted me.

That was one day at the old Waldorf-Astoria bar, and T. A. Daly, at that time editor of The Catholic Standard and Times, introduced us. After an hour, "I have to hurry back," Dunne said, "to write a piece tonight." "When do you have to get it in?" I asked naïvely, for I was on the Evening Mail staff, and my idea of imminence was a column due in an hour. "Last Thursday," said Pete.

Dunne was an artist. I use the word jealously. He revered the art of saying things perfectly; he hated slovenliness of thought and expression. That, perhaps, is why he had so acute an appreciation of Ring Lardner, an artist comparable to Dunne. And both were cursed, or blessed, with such lofty ideals of writing that almost never were they satisfied with their product; yet I know of no prose writers who could boast—though neither ever did—of so negligible a percentage of second-rateness.

The Dooley articles began in Chicago in 1893. That was the Chicago of the World's Fair; and Dunne was a newspaperman twenty-six years of age, already a veteran reporter of eight years' standing. He became a reporter for The Tribune; then he went to The Evening Post, where the first "Mr. Dooley" piece appeared in August, 1893; in 1897 he became editor of The Journal, wherein the "Dooley" pieces were printed until 1900, when he decided to come East.

And still for four or five years "Mr. Dooley" continued to appear weekly, syndicated in the newspapers by R. H. Russell. Collier's Weekly then published him with illustrations by C. D. Gibson. I met Dunne in the fall of 1907, when he, as one of the editors of The American Magazine, was writing a monthly department, "In the Interpreter's House." It was an editorial article on current matters. It was written in undialect and beautiful English, and though like most other writers he hated work of any kind, the medium of plain English was a relief to him after years of the dialect grind.

It may be that the interest in Irish dialect had waned. For in the nineties of "Mr. Dooley's" wide popularity, the country was full of first and second-generation Irish; the fathers of the boys I played with, John Finerty, Harry McCormick and John Tait, were born in Ireland. And the stage was full of Irishmen; every vaudeville house had one or two Irish acts on its bill; the Russell Brothers, John W. Kelly, Bobby Gaylor, Johnny Ray, Ferguson and Mack, Maggie Cline and Johnny Carroll; there were still echoes of Harrigan and Hart; and the tenor voices of Chauncey Olcott and Andrew Mack, in Irish plays written for them, were heard in the land. Every burlesque show had its Irish comedian.

Nobody who knew Dunne failed to be impressed, from the Chicago reporters and others who worked with him, to the young men and women he met in Bermuda in 1933. To these last he was a charming elderly gentleman who had done something in a literary way along about the Battle of Shiloh.

About the time the "Dooley" sketches first appeared in The Evening Post, The Chicago Record printed a daily column called "Stories of the Streets and of the Town." This was the work of George Ade, and in that column he wrote his first "Fable in Slang." Let Mr. Ade remember Dunne:

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"When I arrived in Chicago in 1890, Pete Dunne, although still quite young, was a star reporter on The Herald. Even his newspaper stories showed a careful and precious use of words, and his witticisms were crystal clear and models of brevity. When I first met him I was properly awed, because he gave the impression of being informed, wise, vested with authority, superior, cynical and controversial. Early in the nineties the Whitechapel Club was organized, which is still remembered as a collection of harum-scarum irresponsibles who scorned the conventions and shared an abiding enthusiasm for alcoholic liquors. It was more than that. It was really a round-up of interesting intellectuals whose opinions and doctrinal beliefs were far in advance of the Chicago environment of that time, although they have since come into favor and received governmental endorsement. Not all of what they stood for will ever be approved by popular vote, because they were irreligious and probably might have been classified as agnostics. They had such scathing contempt for the self-seeking political bosses and the stuffed shirts of the millionaire aristocracy of their own town, and such a hatred for the tyranny of wealth, that they probably might have been called socialists, with a leaning toward outright anarchy. Certainly they believed that many of the so-called anarchists, convicted for encouraging the Haymarket massacre, had been framed by courts and prosecutors who had been urged to extreme severity by the panicky millionaires. Many of them had been behind the scenes and their radical opinions were fortified by the unpublished stories which they knew so well but never had been permitted to write.

"Among other members of the Club, besides Pete and me, were Hermann, the magician, John T. McCutcheon, Senator Billy Mason, T. E. Powers, Wallace Rice, Charlie Seymour and Brand Whitlock.

"Pete's stuff ran for a year or two before it began to attract general attention. Just as 'Dooley' began to court public favor, I broke out with my early 'Fables in Slang,' and so it happened that Pete and I began our syndicating, under the management of R. H. Russell of New York, just about the same time. Both of us began to collect important money for the first time. We kept up the syndicating until the demand began to ease off a little and we were tired of the routine.

"The 'Dooley' sketches were caustic and witty editorials written in the Irish dialect. I don't think Pete ever took them very seriously or agreed with the public that they were more deserving of attention than his chaste and correct editorials done in dignified English. He was like me in that popularity was thrust upon him, and he was marked for all time as a specialist in the production of a certain freak sort of 'humor.' I am sure that none of us ever regarded his output as 'humor,' but merely truth concealed in sugar-coated idiom and dialect. Pete was a positive character with a most engaging personality. He had a smile that was positively radiant. He was a remarkable person, with a vast understanding and an X-ray intelligence, and our friendship will always be one of my prized memories."

The expression of that social consciousness, as articulated in the "Dooley" sketches, would never have been printed unless they had been written in dialect. For editors, fearful of calling names, feel that the advertisers and the politicians and the social leaders—money, politics and social ambition being the Achilles heels of editors and publishers—are journalism's sacred cows. But if pretense and hypocrisy are attacked by the office clown, especially in dialect, the crooks and the shammers think that it is All in Fun. And when the Dunnes and the Lardners die, the papers print editorials saying that there was no malice in their writing and no bitterness in their humor. Few popular writers ever wrote more maliciously and bitterly than Lardner and Dunne. They resented injustice, they loathed sham and they hated the selfish stupidity that went with them.

Anger and a warm sympathy for the underprivileged underlay almost all the "Dooley" sketches. They may be divided, roughly, into two classes: those that might, but for a name or two, have been written yesterday; and those that are important only as bits of the American life of the day. Most of them, on the surface, are dated; many of them are outworn—almost museum pieces.

Yet to read them all again, as I have been doing, brings back to me countless memories of whole episodes and trends of political, social and literary history. And while they summon vividly Chicago local affairs of the nineties, and this about Tiddy Rosenfelt and that about Willum Jennings Bryan, you can substitute current names in such pieces and it will astonish you to see how many of the sketches are true of today. Essays like "Expert Testimony" and "The Supreme Court's Decisions" are sound philosophy; the Dreyfus-case articles are sane and burning criticism of conditions that might arise anywhere, in any nation where the prejudgment of biased power affects the liberty of its citizens.

For me to praise "Mr. Dooley" seems absurd; I would as soon endorse a sunrise. But there are many who never read Finley Peter Dunne's acute essays on American life. To them I should like to make a house-to-house canvass, on a satisfaction-guaranteed-or-money-refunded basis. To Dunneophiles republication of selections from the "Dooley" series will be a joy.

Once Mr. Dunne was speaking of some current authors, writers of photographic dialogue. "They are wonderful," he said, "but they don't make anything up." And that was Peter Dunne's writing religion: To Make Things Up. And the things he made up were great things.

FRANKLIN P. ADAMS

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Jobs Wanted

RADIO STATION KQV of Pittsburgh is the smallest in size and importance of the city's five stations. But KQV on occasion has given evidence of being closer to the pulse of the people than its more important rivals. KQV, at any rate, is the first radio station in the country to turn a realistic and practical attention to the problem of unemployment. It has opened up a slave market.

For several months unemployed persons have been coming to a Friday-night studio program known as "Jobs Wanted." With a Mr. Lee Sellars, they converse briefly about themselves, their troubles, their training for work. If any listener wishes to buy he telephones the radio station.

"Do you have a job that needs an employee? Listen carefully. Ladies and Gentlemen, we present 'Jobs Wanted.' This program gives you an opportunity to interview men and women out of work. Listen to these unemployed. If in your office or home, factory or garage, you can find a job for them, call us immediately. A young woman is waiting to take your call."

Godspeed to KQV and Mr. Sellars. If they can find jobs for a dozen people they are above irony or satire, as the people who seek jobs there are above it. But KQV and Mr. Sellers, whether they know it or not, have set up nothing less than a modern version of the last century's slave block.

The Unemployed Person, having brought himself to market, is introduced to Mr. Sellars by a secretary. Mr. Sellars converses in a slow, friendly, slightly nervous voice, not unlike that of an apprentice undertaker resolved to be natural, though subdued, with the family of the deceased.

"Application Number One, how do you do?"

"How do you do, Mr. Sellars?"

"Application Number One, tell us about yourself."

"I am a garage mechanic for six years, Mr. Sellars."

"A garage mechanic. Are you a good mechanic?"

"Yes, sir, a good garage mechanic."

"Married? Children?"

"Yes, sir."

"Tell me about yourself. I don't want to keep asking you questions."

"One child, eleven weeks old." (Pause.)

"How long have you been out of work?"

"Since January 17. I was laid off the same day the baby was born."

"Oh, that's too bad. That is too bad. You do need a job. Here is a robust young man twenty-seven years old. There must be someone who can give him a job."

"Any type work I can get in, I'm willing to do."

"This has been most interesting. Your story has been most distressing. Have you anything more to say?"

"Nothing except that I hope I get a job soon."

"Well, I certainly wish you luck. Now, Miss Minnis."

"Our second guest is a man. Number Two, from Oakland."

"How do you do, Number Two? Tell us about yourself."

"I am fifty-six years old, but I feel forty."

"You don't look over forty. Which of us would you say looks the older, Miss Minnis?"

"Well, I would say you both look about the same age."

"Tell us more about yourself. Married?"

"Yes siree. Three children. Three alive, all married and living away from home. They have troubles of their own—out of work—they come bumming on their old man."

"What business were you in?"

"In painting and decorating. I have been out of work five years. I'd like to get back to my trade."

"But would you be a night watchman?"

"I'd be tickled to death."

"Thank you very much for coming."

"I could swing a pick and shovel."

"It was pleasant having you with us. If anyone is interested in this fine old man. . . . Now, Miss Minniss."

And so they continue. There comes a middle-aged lady who hopes to get a job as a housekeeper in Pittsburgh so she can visit her child in the city hospital. There is an appliance salesman who will break up his home and go on the road if he does not get work by May 1. Following a pause for an advertisement by a time-payment clothing store, comes the forty-year-old woman with a teacher's certificate in English, French and International Law, who advises young listeners not to spend "half your life on educating yourself when it doesn't seem to do any good." The "wagon-jobber" (pie salesman) who once owned a business of his own and took Business Psychology at night school. The laid-off railroad brakeman who says simply, "Things are really tough."

"I honestly need the work." . . . "I have never had a steady job." . . . "I'd prefer almost anything." . . . "I should think they would need someone like me." . . . "I could do a good day's work." . . . "I guess you already know what it means to want a job and not be able to get it." . . . "Nowadays you got to take anything you can get." . . . "I want to wake up some morning to a pleasant dream, someone calling me to work." . . . "I need the work bad."

In the ninth year of the depression and the first of the recession—why moralize? Listening to a half-hour of this procession across the slave block is like visiting a chamber of horrors. It is appalling. There are more than twelve million of these lost people. I can think of a number of worthy individuals who should be made to listen to it eight hours a day. In time they might come to agree with the laid-off railroad brakeman:

"Things are really tough."

ROBERT MCROBERTS

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Shoot the Works

Columnist's Progress

I GOT A KICK when I picked up last week's issue of The New Republic and saw the caption "Brickbats for Broun." And there they were—a full half-dozen, all edged and jagged with anger and with irritation. I like to boast, but I refrain occasionally through fear of being caught crawling out on some insufficient limb. But this week I propose to sun myself and gloat.

Presently I will be fifty years old, which is practically halfway home, and it seems to me that I have progressed considerably during the Indian Summer of what I call facetiously my career. Until I was forty, or a little beyond, my small circle of readers and acquaintances were inclined to refer to me as "good old Broun." If my name was mentioned somebody would say, "Good old Broun, he never said an unkind word about anybody in his life."

That is a pretty nasty reputation, but I'm afraid I deserved it. Save for deficiencies in prose style and intellectual capacity I was a sort of road-company Chesterton in my early youth. If I had been able to do jingles I might almost have been a bush-league Eddie Guest. Good old Broun—the fat friend of all the world!

No natural juices of benevolence swept me into this low estate. It was timidity pure and simple. If I said, "Yes, Mr. Swope," to my employer I merely followed the form observed by those about me. But I even lacked the gumption to maximate my ego by bawling out office boys and waiters. Frequently I am forced to blush when ex-office boys of The Morning World happen to alight from their limousines at the precise corner where I am walking. Most of them are high-powered scenario writers, although a few have gone into banking and the arts. But each and every one greets me with well simulated enthusiasm. The greeting generally runs, "Come and have a drink, Heywood. I owe you something."

My first faint hope is that some fugitive dollar cast upon the waters a quarter of a century ago is about to return with compound interest. It doesn't work out that way.

"I want to thank you," says the tycoon, "because in the days when you were a columnist and I was a humble copy boy you were always pleasant and even-tempered. That meant a lot to me then. In those days I actually thought that columnists were important. You remember those little cubbyholes down that corridor off Herbie Swope's office? When Swopie bellowed you can bet we all came running. He scared the life out of us. F. P. A. was just about as tough, and on a mean day Alec Woollcott would bite your head off. But you were different, Heywood. We used to laugh about it."

And in these meetings I wince and drink the wine of remorse gingerly because I realize that of all the early worms in the newspaper craft I must have been the most abject. Many years ago a well known actress, who was a little tight at the time, got me in a corner during a party and said, "Mr. Broun, promise me just one thing."

"Anything your little heart desires, Mrs. Siddons."

"Promise me that you will never lose your wistfulness," said the lovely lady. And I promised. It was as if a man with a malformed foot vowed never to cease limping.

The first faint glow of release came out of a fugitive and minor comic column. At least the intent was one of very mild mockery. It so happened that a particularly bulldoggish son of Eli had written a sentimental novel about life under the New Haven elms. The hero was a halfback and in the big scene he rescued a newsboy who doubled as mascot of the mighty Yale eleven. According to the story, the dashing undergraduate scooped him up as if he were a fumble and saved him from the advancing rush of the trolley line which skirted the campus.

Commenting on the story, I observed that there had been a somewhat similiar incident just outside the yard in Cambridge. One of our own newsboys stood stupefied upon the tracks as the midnight car from Scolly Square swept down upon him. But I added that the rescue was accomplished in a way more dashing than in the Yale legend. The nearest undergraduate was not a star halfback. He was only a second substitute end upon the Crimson's scrub eleven. And instead of picking up the newsboy he tackled the trolley car and threw it for a ten-yard loss. I believe there were a few further rambling comments about the decline in Yale virility since Professor Billy Phelps managed to teach the Boola boys to read and turned them loose on Shakespeare and other lyric poets.

To my intense surprise I received the next day the first unfriendly letter I had ever had in twenty years of journalism. The writer said that I was evidently a Harvard snob and a stiff and that if I would furnish him with my home address he would be glad to call any morning and give me a good poke right in the nose. The next day I had four more missives written in similiar vein. This was pretty heady stuff for me. It was the first testimony ever to bring home personally the power of the press. In a startled way I said to myself, "How long has this been going on? I can make people mad if I want to." And so, emboldened by my triumph, I wrote a snooty piece about Princeton and got two dozen outraged letters. In fact the managing editor called me in and said, "Broun, don't you think that you are making a mistake in raising controversial issues? Better stick to your old charm and let it go at that." But I had tasted beef tea, if not blood, by this time and there was no holding me.

"I will be bold," I cried, "I will be forthright and nobody can check my utterances." I would like to make this autobiographical note a tale of a steady upward climb. It didn't work out in that way. The trouble was that I had nothing much to utter. I had been "good old Broun" for so long that I had no passionate convictions. All I did was snipe at sitting birds. It took a major national tragedy to animate me to any major purpose. But I trust that I am not being conceited in saying that by now a considerable number of people regard me as one of the most offensive persons engaged in newspaper work. I have almost a complete set of enemies who detest me with a very convincing sincerity. I mean to fill the shelf. I am never going to be good old Broun again. In fact if anybody tries that upon me my lip will curl in anger as I advance menacingly and say, "When you call me that smile, damn you."

HEYWOOD BROUN

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Washington Notes

The Democratic Party's Fifth Column

THE PRESIDENT'S PUMP-PRIMING PROGRAM is likely to be enacted, but only after a melancholy fight. The Democratic reactionaries are determined that they, and not Mr. Roosevelt, shall dictate the spending of at least part of the funds. Take, for example, the case of Senator Wheeler. The voters of Mr. Wheeler's Montana hunger for federal irrigation and reclamation works. It happens, however, that the Montana Democratic organization is split between Mr. Wheeler's adherents and the friends of Mr. Jerry O'Connell, one of the most courageous and brilliant liberals in Congress. Mr. Wheeler has announced that he sees no need for a general public-works appropriation—the spending of which would be in New Deal hands—but would be willing to vote for specific irrigation and reclamation projects. Projects thus earmarked would help Mr. Wheeler and would disadvantage Mr. O'Connell. Similar situations exist in many states.

The reactionaries have concocted an elaborate tactical plan. They quite obviously mean to resort to a concealed filibuster in the Senate, the same parliamentary submarine that torpedoed the Supreme Court bill a year ago. Mr. Roosevelt's program will be permitted to slip through the House without undue opposition. It is felt that the House reactionaries did a neat job on the reorganization bill and that their leaders are entitled to rest and show their medals. But even without a fight in the House, the pump-priming bill will not reach the Senate until the middle of May, when all the members of the House and many Senators—especially Mr. Roosevelt's leader, Senator Barkley—will be anxious to get home for their campaigning. Then the senatorial blah-blah-blah will flow. A forum will have been created where the conservatives can pound away at Mr. Roosevelt's alleged budgetary sins. If the Senate liberals try to answer back, they will simply be contributing to the reactionaries' filibuster.

The administration helmsmen are aware of these perils. As these Notes are written, they are trying to use the pending tax bill as a bargaining point. In the Senate's version, the tax bill makes perhaps greater concessions to Wall Street than any measure passed under Mr. Hoover. The administration leaders have demanded that the Senate reactionaries agree, first, to changes in the tax bill itself and, second, to the peaceable enactment of the pump-priming program. Otherwise they threaten that Mr. Roosevelt will use his veto powers, and that no tax bill of any kind will pass at this session.

The administration leaders are also using prospective PWA allotments to gain senatorial votes, according to the hallowed New Deal custom. Last week the PWA made known a list of 2,785 approved projects, involving an expenditure of $1,016,686,130. The gravitational pull of this amount of public money on the eve of an election campaign is enormous. If administration leaders were ready to promise large chunks of it to reactionaries, the pump-priming program would go through the Senate like a weasel through a hencoop. But patronage distribution invariably raises great difficulties. How can favors be bestowed on Senator Wheeler, for example, when his Montana colleague, Mr. Murray, and Representative O'Connell have borne the heat and sweat of the Roosevelt battle? How can projects be awarded Mr. Van Nuys of Indiana to the neglect of Mr. Minton? Etc., etc.

Liberal members of the Senate report a sharp lobbying campaign by big business to choke off additional funds for the La Follette civil-liberties committee. Mr. La Follette is asking for $60,000. Twenty thousand is needed to complete the committee's report on testimony already taken and to draft legislative recommendations, while $40,000 is wanted for future work. The committee since its inception has had only $90,000, a sum which compares with $260,000 spent by the Pecora stock-market investigation, and $250,000 by the Wheeler committee on railroad reorganizations. Senator La Follette is now in the midst of digging into the anti-labor activities of business organizations. The archetype of such groups is the formidable NAM, and it is reported that the same lobbyists who in the past have acted for the NAM are now opposing further money for the civil-liberties committee.

The prospects of Mr. Tom Kennedy, CIO candidate for the Democratic gubernatorial nomination in Pennsylvania, have improved immensely in the last few days. As told in these Notes, the White House originally appeared to frown on Mr. Kennedy, and to favor his opponent, Mr. Charles A. Jones, hand-picked candidate of the Democratic state chairman, Mr. Lawrence. Since then Mr. Roosevelt has apparently had a change of heart. According to report, credit for this belongs to Senator Joe Guffey, most potent of the Kennedy partisans. Mr. Guffey is supposed to have enlisted the interest of Postmaster General Farley by demonstrating that the Kennedy ticket, if victorious in the primaries, could almost certainly carry the November election against Mr. Gifford Pinchot. In contrast, Mr. Guffey argued that the Jones-Lawrence ticket would be sure to lose. Even though Mr. Pinchot's Republicanism is extremely unorthodox, Mr. Guffey is reported to have urged that a defeat in Pennsylvania would have a bad effect on Democratic prestige nationally. More important, in Pennsylvania itself it would mean the loss of thousands of jobs, a weakening of the new, painfully constructed Democratic organization and the possible loss of the state in 1940.

Equally helpful to Mr. Kennedy have been the astonishing campaign successes of his running-mate, Mr. S. Davis Wilson, mayor of Philadelphia and now candidate for Senator. Last week he forced from Governor "Fat Boy" Earle, the Lawrence-Jones senatorial candidate, the humiliating admission that he had received $30,000 from a Philadelphia contractor, Mr. Matthew H. McCloskey. Governor Earle has pleaded that he has repaid all but $6,000 of the loans. The writer, who has learned to expect goofiness among people in politics, is willing to believe that Mr. Earle took Mr. McCloskey's money with a pure heart, but Pennsylvania voters are like to be unjustly skeptical.

Washington T. R. B.

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Other People's Money

An Open Letter to the FCC

Hon. Frank R. McNinch, T. A. M. Craven, George Henry Payne, E. O. Sykes, Thad H. Brown, Paul A. Walker, Norman S. Case.

Gentlemen:

My object in writing you is to press upon your attention a suggestion for dealing with one of the grave problems of radio broadcasting.

One of the serious questions which one day free societies must deal with is the control of the great agencies of communication in so far as they are used for communication of news and ideas. Much is being said now of the widespread activity of propaganda groups. No one, I think, will seek to curtail the right of individuals or organized groups to propagate their ideas in the way which may seem to them most effective. This is of the very essence of freedom of speech. But there are certain instruments which may be used for propaganda. Indeed, effective propaganda is difficult, if not impossible, without the use of these instruments. One of the most important is the radio. It also happens that this instrument is now, so far as its operation is concerned, in the hands of private commercial interests and is operated for profit. I do not wish to make here any criticism of this, but recognize it as the established form in this country. But recognizing this, we have to concede also that the radio is not open for propaganda on any very extensive scale save to those who have the money to engage its facilities. Whether we approve of this or not, the fact is clear that this gives to the groups with abundant money resources a disproportionate access to the radio as an instrument of propaganda.

This might be looked upon complacently if these money groups were found on all sides of great social and economic questions. Perhaps this is true as to some questions. But certainly on questions affecting the large commercial interests it is not true.

It must be conceded that the radio invites to its microphones and forums men of a wide variety of views. I do not refer to this. I refer to the use of the radio for propaganda, and propaganda to be effective means frequent and regular assaults upon the minds of the groups to be affected. The President of the United States is looked upon as an effective radio performer. But I was struck by the fact that in his five years of administration he has made only thirteen appearances on the radio in his fireside chats. Dr. Cameron of the Ford Motor Company doubles that number of appearances each year. I do not see how the conclusion is to be escaped that the present arrangement gives the great commercial interests of the country an almost exclusive use of the radio as a propaganda weapon.

There is another phase of this. One of the chief problems in the effort to reach the mind of the public is the initial problem of getting it to listen. An occasional guest speaker with ten or fifteen minutes at his disposal is more apt to be greeted, as soon as he speaks, by a nationwide rattle of dials shutting him off. Therefore the art of the showman must be called into use, first to get a great audience, then to entertain it as a prelude to slipping over on it five or ten minutes of mind-molding propaganda. Permit me to quote from a short address I made April 14 over an America's Town Meeting of the Air program:

> There is no more effective time to catch the mass mind than on Sunday evening. It is relaxed. It is in a benevolent mood. On Sunday evening the family is gathered in the living room when into their midst float the strains of music from a great symphony orchestra. In millions of homes people are listening. This goes on for half an hour. Then as the strains of some well loved old song fade from the air and the family sits around thoroughly softened up, there floats into the room and into the unguarded chambers of their minds the voice of the propagandist. For five or ten minutes the carefully planned infection flows into the mind. It tells of the romantic saga of business, the great achievements, the massive wisdom, the matchless courage, the civilizing alchemy of the great business man as distinguished from the selfish and narrow ignorance and wickedness of the government—the great-souled business leader compared with the small-minded and vicious Senator.

There are other programs like this. Who can afford to put on a counter-blast to this and do it week after week with a national hook-up and the effective exordium of a symphony orchestra?

The same thing can be said of the news commentators who appear on the air. Day after day the news comes through cooked, colored, selected, guarded, censored by advertising agents.

The newspaper, of course, has plenty of bias in favor of the advertiser. But the newspaper does not rent out its columns to advertisers to be run by them. The editorial departments of even the poorest newspapers do operate under the dominion of certain ethical restraints which the outsider cannot quite understand. The advertiser has no such restraints. He is not likely to develop them.

With this more or less clumsy overture, here is my suggestion. I urge that the Communications Commission establish a rule that time on the air may not be sold to advertisers for any other object than advertising of their products. They may use music, orchestras, swing or symphony, monologists, singers, choruses, humorists—any form of entertainment. But they may not use news broadcasters, news commentators or lecturers or speakers on social, political, economic or religious subjects. Their patter must be limited to entertainment or ballyhoo for their products.

The radio may use newscasters, commentators, lecturers, debaters on public questions of all sorts, but these must be limited (a) to those employed and directed by the radio broadcasting stations themselves or broadcasting syndicates and (b) to those who appear upon the unpaid-for programs of cultural, educational or political organizations. Whether such organizations may buy time or not is a point to be decided later. But certainly such programs, if paid for, should be limited to a fraction of the time on the air.

I urge the Commission to give this suggestion its most serious consideration and that at the earliest time. It is in the interest of fairness, of truth and the public weal.

JOHN T. FLYNN

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Drama Critics Circle Awards

THE DRAMA CRITICS CIRCLE met on the afternoon of April 18 to establish the awards for the season just ending. The citation for the best foreign play of the season, a new activity of the Circle now exercised for the first time, went by a unanimous vote to Paul Vincent Carroll's "Shadow and Substance."

On my part there might have been some hesitation between this play and Jean Giraudoux's "Amphitryon" had I not known that, to begin with, the case was hopeless there, and, further, that this form of the classic farce is somewhat outside our regular theatre pattern nowadays. Within the classic tradition we had in "Amphitryon" an outlining, a simplification and typification, and a total arrangement within which can be developed inexhaustible meanings and shadings and comments on life. For Anglo-Saxon and Teutonic audiences this remains a baffling form. Almost inevitably a play in such a form will seem to them little less than a farce in general; and whatever rich resource and breathing variety may be added to its content will very likely be overlooked or misread.

On the other hand, "Shadow and Substance" can hold its own as a play dealing with profound matter and exhibiting an unusual degree of boldness in the sheer use of culture itself—for in any production these days the mere implication of culture, or "choice," or cerebral rigor, implies a certain amount either of courage or of reckless vision. It is no little matter for a play to succeed in making one side of its dramatic struggle the force of the classical and austere Church, felt as acting through a man of distinction, choiceness and human frailty.

The other element involved in this dramatic struggle, while quite as difficult to create, is, when it comes off, more immediately perceived. It would lie in the direction of humility, warmth, expressive humanity, and the power of rapture and self-forgetfulness; and it may be found in a person, simple, total, plain and luminous like the Irish maid Mr. Carroll has written so well, and Miss Julie Haydon acts with such unbroken perfection, acts indeed with a homely certainty that seems to say that what she is doing is only the plain prose of ecstasy.

When it came to the American play that was to receive the plaque annually presented by the Drama Critics Circle, the first ballot, including five plays, ran thus:

"Of Mice and Men"	9
"Our Town"	4
"The Cradle Will Rock"	1
"Golden Boy"	1
"Prologue to Glory"	1

On the second ballot the number of plays dropped to four. On the third there were two, eleven votes to "Of Mice and Men" (John Steinbeck) and five to "Our Town" (Thornton Wilder). The fourth raised the number of votes for "Of Mice and Men" to the twelve needed.

It is interesting to reflect that with both these plays finally considered for the American prize, there was a genuine American background and reason for existence. Of the two, "Our Town" had material more immediately accessible to people in this part of the country, or at least to readers in this part of the country. Broadway—which does not read—has after all a sort of slapdash knowledge of the West that on the whole is about as true as the Broadway picture of New England. We may say, however, that "Our Town" had the advantage, or disadvantage, of a track fairly well laid down of tradition. It gained, or lost, as you may choose to think, by a kind of self-conscious insight within, as it were, the material itself.

The play, as we saw it produced, had about it all the quality of a dream, the simplification, and intensity, the variety and at the same time monotony, the remoteness, the intimacy, the diffused vividness of a mood. As I wrote at the time in my review, we might get farther in its definition by thinking of this play as a kind of factual reverie. As regards the factual, however, you need not look in "Our Town" for the bite and the unpredictable, deep glimpse, the divine insight and the wayward taste, the straying, unequal miracle, to be found in Sherwood Anderson's early work like "Winesburg, Ohio."

Not everyone among us might be sure of knowing it, but "Of Mice and Men" is marked by delicate and sensitive perceptions that are quite equal to anything in the New England play. As a matter of fact, I should say it is more sensitive. Its characters and incidents suggest the clarity and outline of legend; but within them there is a kind of quivering suspense and an almost fatalistic giving of yourself to life.

More elusively, perhaps, but just as certainly, "Of Mice and Men" is as much arranged, built on artifice, left as a work of art, with its own kind of reality and wholeness, as "Our Town" is. Sharp bits of the naturalistic, or whatever we may call it, streaks of brutality, frank outbursts of expression, or a locale of violent light and shade, might seem at times to disprove this, but the whole play remains dominated by its mood; the element of design in it is unusually marked.

And instead of losing, as some followers of realism might have said it would, by this evident manipulation for the effect, the play gains in its total impact and imaginative compulsion.

In the characters, too, we get a sense of arrangement or design, so definitely carried through that we have almost a sense of types, an almost classic designation and completeness to each. But again there is no loss on that account. The figures strike sharply on our minds, simply and inexhaustibly; and they have variety even in their degrees of distinctness. The two leading characters, farm laborers, one of them a defective, the other leading and guarding him, are remarkably well carried through by the dramatist, with boldly repeated motifs, tender, half-muted revelations, and a profound sense of the theatre.

The citation prepared for the press does not suggest some perfunctory award of a prize to a play, as if to say the least ugly daughter is the family beauty.

"The New York Drama Critics Circle awards its prize to John Steinbeck's 'Of Mice and Men' for its direct force and perception in handling a theme genuinely rooted in American life; for its bite into the strict quality of its material; for its refusal to make this study of tragical loneliness and frustration either cheap or sensational; and finally for its simple, intense and steadily rising effect on the stage."

STARK YOUNG

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The Bandwagon

The Bishop of Münster in Westphalia, the Most Rev. Clemens August von Galen, preached in his cathedral about the influence of the Church on the education of youth. Suddenly a uniformed Nazi stood up and exclaimed: "How can anybody talk about youth if he himself has neither wife nor child?" The Bishop answered in a thundering voice: "In this house I will allow no offensive remarks against the Führer." – *From The San Francisco Monitor, a Catholic weekly newspaper.*

The chaplain should neglect no opportunity to help both officers and men to maintain a cheerful and courageous spirit with unshaken faith in the high cause which they serve, through both the monotony of peace and the trying ordeals of war. – *From War Department Training Manual No. 2270-5 (June 10, 1937) entitled "The Chaplain."*

While bolshevism is a system for the redistribution of wealth, National Socialism is a system for the redistribution of honor. – *From the magazine, Sociology and Social Research.*

Captain Jaffray, it was alleged, swung the fox round by the whip which bound it, and, blowing on his horn, "apparently to encourage the hounds," held on to the fox while the hounds tore it to pieces. . . . Mr. Hinchcliffe, for the defendant, said that Captain Jaffray bitterly resented the accusation. . . . To say of Captain Jaffray that he caused suffering to a fox was "simply unthinkable." He had been a M.F.H. for over twelve years, and his kindness to animals was "simply notorious." – *From a news item in The Irish Times (Dublin).*

Add Definitions of Democracy: IX

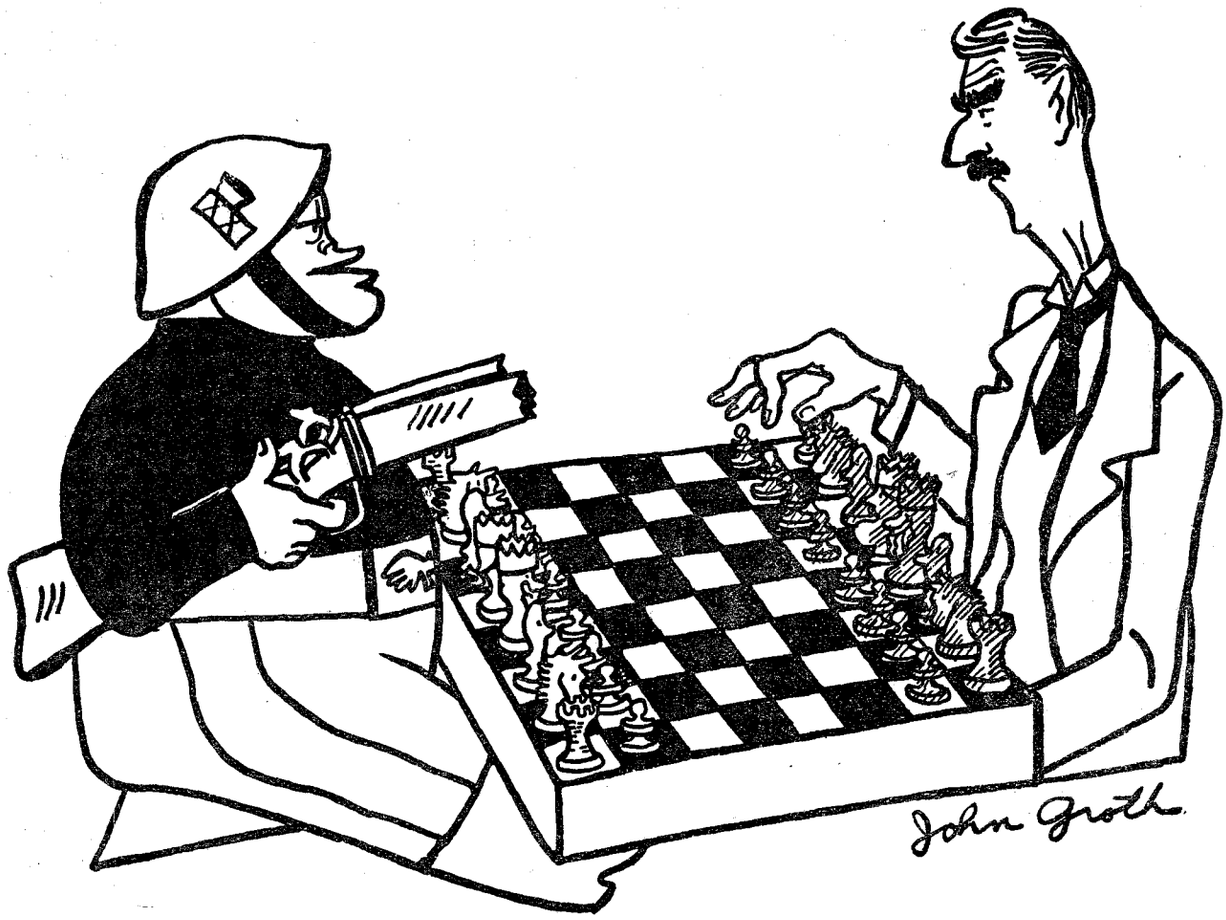
Miss Thompson began with the assertion that government by the majority is not a proper definition of democracy and "is at variance with the entire philosophy which lies behind the American Constitution." She added that government by majority meant scrapping the Constitution, that the Constitution and the Supreme Court existed for the express purpose of checking untrammeled majority rule. – *From a news report of a speech by Miss Dorothy Thompson, published in The Cleveland Plain Dealer.*

Made in Hollywood

The original motion pictures of the "Panay" incident were a great disappointment and there is proof that those shown in this country were made at San Diego, California. No, they probably did not have the coöperation of the United States Navy in making them—private interests did it.

The American people have an erroneous impression of the incident. – *Kaju Nakumura, a Japanese, interviewed in The Baltimore Sun.*

Our readers are invited to contribute to this column and $1 will be paid for each item used. Address The Bandwagon, care of The New Republic. – THE EDITORS.



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Correspondence

The Neutrality Act and Spain

SIR: I do not follow you when you declare editorially [The New Republic, April 6] that the United States should scrap the Neutrality Act with reference to the (late?) civil war in Spain. Why make any exceptions? Your sympathy with the leftist factions over there is understandable and defensible, but one of the very important ideas behind the neutrality legislation was to prevent economic and *other* interests creating any situation in which this country would find itself less insulated against involvement.

It appears that The New Republic is in favor of this country taking sides in *one* of the several foreign disputes going on, through legislative changes calculated to benefit the favored faction and ideology. And why? Ironically it would seem that in thus taking sides and implementing our decision we would be helping make part of Europe safe for something labeled "democracy."

The surest road to peace for this country is to follow a policy of rigid neutrality toward foreign disputes whether in the Far East or in Europe. If, in our sincere attempts to be neutral, our policy should quite by accident inconvenience one side more than another, that, I maintain, is irrelevant. To make exceptions is to endanger the admirable policy so ably defended in your recent supplement on National Defense. If the United States should make an exception in the Spanish struggle and take positive legislative steps intended to benefit the leftist cause and make Spain safe for (Stalinist?) democracy, how can one reasonably and logically object to other groups in the country demanding that we amend or repeal the Neutrality Act to permit us to take sides in any other given foreign war, civil or otherwise?

Happily The New Republic is not ordinarily numbered among those American groups (such as the Carnegie Endowment and the Communist Party) who would have the United States join with other angel nations in repelling the devil nations of the world, that democracy might be preserved. It is depressing to realize that many able progressive groups are allowing themselves to become preoccupied with defending "democracy" in foreign lands, when there are clearly so m ny reforms necessary in our own country if we are to achieve industrial democracy. Let's make America safe for democracy before we shed any tears for the fate of something naïvely supposed to be democracy in other lands!

Kalamazoo, Mich. J. J. BURNS, M. D.

The original Neutrality Act did not apply to civil wars. The embargo against Spain was adopted because of an urgent request by the President, resulting in a special joint resolution by Congress. The amended Neutrality Act of 1937 was drafted to include civil wars, *after the Spanish embargo was decreed*. The logic of such inclusion is, however, open to question. We believe that it would be making no exception to return to the original plan. There is a practical as well as a theoretical justification for this course. There is little or no danger of our becoming involved in hostilities by allowing the sale of arms in civil wars; it was to avoid the danger of involvement in a general war that the new neutrality policy was adopted. Specifically, neither Italy nor Germany could or would attack us for selling arms to Barcelona.—THE EDITORS

That Russian Novel

SIR: In your issue of April 6 Mr. Edmund Wilson asks us to "shut up that Russian novel" and give only "sympathetic but soberly sociological attention" to present-day Russia. His own sociological inquiry offers us . . . a series of Dostoevsky visions of a "vicious" Russian "soul," illuminated here and there by chance flashes of Chekhovian integrity. There is a "Russian vice" of evasion of responsibility, a "national tendency to lie . . . merging into the oriental," etc. Such emotive generalizations are no credit to Mr. Wilson in his new role as sociologist. Myths are not eliminated by thus assuming as constants of a "national character" (again assumed) the idiosyncracies of a certain class of the Russian people as recorded in the pre-Revolution literature.

Mr. Wilson agrees that certain good things have been done since 1918 to further the welfare of the Russian people. But only through the agency of his mysterious men of good will. . . . They act in despite of the racketeers who have, Mr. Wilson must agree, the responsibility of deciding what these things are and as to how they should be carried out and by whom. The one redeeming feature for Mr. Wilson is the fact that the Russians have been able to "impress on the mind of the world the ideal of the classless society." Yet attempts under Stalin's leadership to work towards that ideal—whether by Five Year Plans, wage differentials and Stakhanovism (exactly in line with Marxist theory as Mr. Wilson acknowledges), democratization of the Constitution—are but racketeering or Soviet "publicity myths."

Berkeley, Calif. I. F. G. MILNER

SIR: Since the 1917 Revolution, I have read everything worth while that I could get my hands on in regard to Russia (limited, of course, as to time). I have also visited the USSR (in 1936). Mr. Edmund Wilson's article—"Shut Up That Russian Novel"—is the best I have seen in many moons.

Columbus, O. J. A. LEIGHTON

The League Then and Now

SIR: It must now be evident to The New Republic, what was almost as clear twenty years ago, that the only hope for permanent peace was the League of Nations; that its failure would result in the kind of world we have at present.

The New Republic opposed the League from the start. When the crucial test came, in 1931, you opposed any effective action by it. The League was essentially a defensive alliance. The fundamental covenant was that all its signatories should exert moral, economic and, in the last resort, military force against any nation that invaded one of its members *vi et armis*. A defensive alliance which fails four times (I count Spain and Austria) to make any serious effort to protect one of its members when attacked properly becomes an object of contempt, and naturally is succeeded by an alliance formed for conquest—one that is even now waging successfully two such wars. W. C. ROSE

Ashland, Mass.

The New Republic originally favored the League idea, but opposed American participation by the United States when the terms of the Treaty of Versailles became known and it was foreseen that the sanctions policy would commit the

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members to maintain by force an unstable status quo. The fears of The New Republic in this respect have been confirmed by history. A League with sanctions would work in a world composed of non-aggressive democracies in which imperialism had been abolished; but the post-war world was not of this character and our participation in collective security would have been, like our participation in the World War itself, an ambiguous alliance with imperialistic powers.—THE EDITORS

On Subsidizing Our Utilities

SIR: I cannot agree with your statement in "Saving the Railroads" [The New Republic, March 2] to the effect that no one wishes to subsidize the railroads if this can possibly be avoided. A subsidy on a grand scale is the only method by which our railroads, our other utilities, and much of our heavy mass-production industry can possibly be made to render the maximum contribution to human welfare of which they are capable. . . .

To move all the traffic which it is economical to move, rates must be lowered to the marginal cost of carrying additional traffic. . . . For railroads and public utilities generally this marginal cost to which rates must be lowered will even in the long run be necessarily less than the average cost in all but the most exceptional cases; rates based on marginal cost will therefore be insufficient to cover operating expenses and a return on capital, additional funds must be made available from somewhere: since private investment will obviously not be forthcoming in the absence of prospective earnings, a subsidy from the government financed through an increased income tax seems the best source.

It is of course highly dangerous to attempt such a subsidy as long as the railroads remain in private hands; for this reason if for no other, government ownership is essential. Indeed, if the administration is willing to inaugurate a marginal-cost rate policy immediately upon the acquisition of the railroads, the nation could well afford to pay a considerably inflated price for them, if only to put a more immediate end to the tremendous waste involved in the continuation of the present underutilization of railroad facilities. . . .

The same criticism also applies to Mr. Cooke's article on electric power in the same issue. Apparently Mr. Cooke would fix electric-power rates so as to cover total cost, including such dubious items, from the point of view of social cost, as taxes, and the "rational allocation of the costs of multiple-purpose projects." Unfortunately there is no rate schedule or combination of rate schedules that will both cover such costs and at the same time promote the full economic utilization of the resources of the electric-power industry. . . . The only way to avoid . . . waste is to subsidize the production and especially the distribution of electric power in order that the rates may be lowered to the marginal cost. If it seem unjust to subsidize the Tennessee Valley at the expense of the rest of the nation, the remedy is either to levy a local income tax or to proceed as rapidly as possible to socialize the power industry throughout the entire nation.

It is high time that progressive liberals should begin to realize that many of our industries require subsidizing if our economic structure is to function efficiently . . . and that the socialization of utilities and heavy industry is necessary not merely because present owners may be wicked monopolistic profit-seekers, but chiefly and fundamentally because the inherent technical characteristics of these industries are such as to make even a nominal profit or return on investment utterly incompatible with the promotion of the general economic welfare. . . .

Washington, D. C. WILLIAM VICKREY

From The New Republic Mail Bag

James M. Speers, chairman of the American Committee for Christian German Refugees, 287 Fourth Avenue, New York City, writes about the difficulty involved in taking care of non-Jewish refugees from Nazi Germany and Austria. The misconception that the problems of Nazi persecutions are almost entirely Jewish problems has made it extremely hard for the Committee to raise the money necessary to help the hundreds of thousands of Germans—liberals, socialists and Christians of Jewish ancestry—who have been technically declared Jews by the Nazi race laws.

The Florida Committee for Progressive Education plans to open a progressive bookshop in Jacksonville, to aid the citizens of Florida who are tired of its long record of violations of civil liberties. The Committee appeals to readers of The New Republic for financial assistance. Contributions should be sent to Dr. Max Shane, 401 Masonic Temple Building, Main and Mantore Streets, Jacksonville, Florida. . . . Reginald Reynolds, 53 Cleveland Square, London W. 2, England, writes that he is editing an anthology of prison literature, collected from countries all over the world. Verse, letters and other writings are eligible for inclusion, provided that they were actually written in prison.

Ellen Gwynn of New Orleans tells about the Red scare raging over the school system of her city, directed primarily against the teachers who are trying to organize a local of the American Federation of Teachers. She cites as a particularly distressing example the case of Miss Roberta Towles, a teacher at Fortier High School for many years, who was suddenly demoted to a grammar-school position. Miss Gwynn feels sure that the reason for the demotion was to discourage Miss Towles from further activity in the Teachers' Union. . . . Jerome Davis tells us the American Federation of Teachers and the Progressive Education Association have organized a conference on Saturday and Sunday mornings, May 7 and 8, in the National Press Club Auditorium, Washington, which will support the recommendations made by the President's Advisory Committee on Education. Details of the meetings may be obtained from Room 405, 817 Fourteenth Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.

What's on the Air?

Representative Henry G. Teigan of Minnesota and Irving Brant discuss "Government Monopolies," Saturday, April 20, 2:30 P.M., NBC-Red Network.

Anthony J. Dimond, Congressional Delegate from Alaska, talks on "The Economic and Defense Problems of United States Possessions," Saturday, April 30, 10:45 P.M., CBS.

President Roosevelt, Mayor Rossi of San Francisco and Norman H. Davis speak on the American Red Cross Conference Program, May 2, 2:30 P.M., CBS and NBC-Blue Network.

William Allen White speaks on the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of Riis House, Tuesday, May 3, 10:45 P.M., CBS.

Musical and dramatic programs of the week include J. M. Synge's "Playboy of the Western World," Saturday, April 30, 5:15 P.M., NBC-Red Network; Pierre Monteux, guest conductor of the NBC Symphony Orchestra, Saturday, April 30, 10 P.M., NBC-Red Network; the last spring concert of the Philharmonic-Symphony Society of New York, Sunday, May 1, 3 P.M., CBS; May Day music festival at the New York World's Fair grounds, Sunday, May 1, 8 P.M., NBC-Blue Network and CBS; the Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler, Wednesday, May 4, 9:30 P. M., NBC-Blue Network; and Alfred Wallenstein's Sinfonietta, Thursday, May 5, 8 P.M., Mutual.

All times given are Eastern Daylight Saving Time.

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Books in Review

The Robber Boys in Politics

THERE IS, IN TRUTH, a huge literature about Mr. Josephson's "key-men" of American politics who rose and fell in the years between the assassination of Lincoln and the election of McKinley in 1896. This literature includes histories that lack dynamic projection or interpretation, such as the many volumes of James Ford Rhodes or the dreary but useful tomes of Oberholtzer. It includes sprightly stuff, such as Thomas Beer's "Hanna" or Harry Thurston Peck's "Twenty Years of the Republic" or the good William Allen White's "Masks in a Pageant"—books which consciously or unconsciously set the surface color of an epoch. It includes revealing memoirs and autobiographies. It includes the "balanced" biographies edited by Allan Nevins for Dodd, Mead, a series in which the main effort is obviously to check black marks off against white in an endeavor to produce a sort of ledger-keeper's estimate of the significance of historical character.

Most of this vast literature about the post-Civil War politicos is useful in one way or another, and might be set down as short-sighted but necessary pioneer work. Unfortunately, however, its inner emptiness has served to mislead even our intelligent historians. In "The Rise of American Civilization" the Beards tend to dismiss the post-Civil War politicos as dimwits or venal errand boys; they frankly prefer to concentrate on the more vital spectacle of the Morgans and the Vanderbilts and the James J. Hills. Following the Beards, Louis Hacker and Benjamin Kendrick, in "The United States Since 1865," write: "Never in American history was politics quite so divorced from reality. . . .The generation following the Civil War saw the final subjugation of a vast continent. . . . Yet statesmanship was never quite so uninspired nor statesmen so inadequate."

Now, Hacker and Kendrick, who are the most intelligent of our post-Beard historians, do not really mean that post-Civil War politics was divorced from reality, or that the politicos of the Conkling-Blaine-Quay days were really "inadequate." They know very well that Blaine and Conkling and Quay and Nelson Aldrich were "adequate" to the particular job they had in hand, which was to manipulate the political controls in the interests of the iron-masters and the railroad builders and the bankers of the swelling industrial revolution. They know very well that the activities of the politicos, as distinct from their slogans and their party platforms, were very close to "reality." In dismissing the "embattled politicians" so cavalierly Hacker and Kendrick have merely succumbed to a manner of speaking. It is perfectly true, as they insist, that James G. Blaine is remembered by no "monument" in the shape of an important act or an amendment to the Constitution. But Blaine's services to the rising business class of nineteenth-century America were inestimable in that he prevented other men—the farmers and the defeated Southern planters—from getting *their* legislation, which would have curbed the business men.

This is a roundabout way of getting to Mr. Josephson's measured, sober and subtle work of synthesis and reinterpretation.[1] But it is the best way of getting to it. For in "The Politicos" a movement in historical writing has come to maturity. In killing off the early historians who took the post-Civil War politicos at their word, Hacker and Kendrick and the Beards failed to consider the politicos as masters of the deed. Mr. Josephson, having no historiographical war to wage, is able to sit back and measure the gap that lies between the word and the deed. But he never forgets the importance of the deed. In ceasing to look at the historians, he is able to look at history. It is the first time that anyone has made a really calm and intelligent study of the role of the post-Civil War politicos.

Mr. Josephson notes that a political party has two missions to perform. It has, first of all, its historical "assignment" to carry out, the interests of its "shareholders" to look after. But it also has an "institutional" urge to perpetuate itself even at the expense of its chief shareholders. The "assignment" of the Republicans in 1861 was to drive the slavocracy of the South from the seats of power and to clear the way for "free" Northern industry and the "free" Northern worker and farmer. After the war, however, the institution of the Republican Party was bent on preserving itself, its jobs and perquisites, at all costs, even at the expense of its humanitarian ideology and its leader, Mr. Lincoln. The result was the era of carpet-bagger and Bloody Shirt, in which the South was kept from returning Democrats to Congress by a combination of legal restraint and bayonets. Had Southern Democrats come back to the Senate in 1865, both the historical "assignment" and the institutional needs of the Republican politicians would have been endangered. Iron-masters might have lost their tariffs, railroad builders might have lost their rights of way and their access to the public treasury, and the Stalwart party leaders—Oliver Morton, Roscoe Conkling, Zack Chandler—would assuredly have been thrown out of their fattest committee posts.

In dramatizing the push-and-haul of the Reconstruction period Mr. Josephson is covering familiar ground. But, unlike Claude Bowers, for example, he keeps his eye on the necessities of practical politics, not on the hypothetical requirements of "sound" public morality. During the Reconstruction period the institutional urge of the Republican Party and the interests of its chief shareholders, the rising business class, ran along the same path for the most part. It is not hard to write of politics in terms of underlying realities as long as a party's institutional needs and the needs of the chief shareholders run together. But in the eighties the paths of the institution and some of the chief shareholders started to diverge. At this point of divergence Mr. Josephson commences to apply a subtler analysis

[1] The Politicos: 1865-1896, by Matthew Josephson. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 770 pages. $4.50.

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than one can find in the older histories. The fight between Spoilsmen and Reformers, for example, has been explained in terms of moral categories. But Mr. Josephson notes that the fight started at the precise moment when the Republican Party, as an institution, began to seem overweening. That moment occurred when the flagrant application of the spoils system commenced to endanger the position of some of the chief shareholders. Wealthy Republican importers such as A. T. Stewart, the department-store owner, objected to being held up by political hacks in Roscoe Conkling's chief patronage preserve, the New York Customs House. Respectable citizens resented having their pockets picked by "rings" which not only demanded money to subsidize the "voting cattle" but to indulge their own expensive tastes. And possessors of franchises gagged at "strike" bills which were introduced by venal legislators for blackmail purposes. The "institution" of the Republican Party was becoming too expensive to maintain; hence the call for "purification," for extension of the merit system. Hence, also, the rise in popularity of the old "rebel" party, the party of the Democrats. "Liberal" capitalists turned to that party in disgust with the Republican excesses. But they were quick to leave it when the silver heresy—which significantly was backed by Hearst, Marcus Daly and other mining tycoons as well as by the Populists—won in the Bryan Convention of 1896. It was too much to ask them to stand by "purity" when their interests were threatened by the silver men.

Mr. Josephson is always the ironist. He notes that the "purification" of politics only served to augment the reliance of politicians on the wealthy. For once federal and state office-holders were no longer dependent on their political bosses for preferment, an important source of party revenue was closed. Lacking jobholders to tax, the politician was forced to depend on the capitalist for the sinews of war. The alliance between political "institution" and capitalist "interest" was henceforward out in the open, and the stage was set for the rise of Mark Hanna, the first "business" boss.

Inveterate readers of political biography won't find very much in Mr. Josephson that is new in the way of facts about personalities. The charm of Blaine, the turkey-gobbler strut of Conkling, the stubborn courage of Grover Cleveland, the soaring spirit of Altgeld, the musical tones of Bryan, the craftiness of Nelson Aldrich—these are old stories by now. But Mr. Josephson is not really interested in personalities; he is interested in the American party system of the Ins and Outs as part of an organic, capitalist whole, and he has done more sheer thinking about this system than any other American historian you can mention. His conclusion is that only once in a lifetime—in 1861, in 1896, in 1932—do class interests succeed in coming to grips with each other under the American party system. Usually class quarrels are smothered in intra-party compromises, and the fabric of our social order is not torn. Whether that is a good thing or a bad thing Mr. Josephson does not say; "The Politicos" is anatomy, not prophecy. But Mr. Josephson's tone implies that he considers it a bad thing; he sounds as though he would welcome a labor party to force an identification of ideology and interest on both sides of the politico-economic fence.

JOHN CHAMBERLAIN

The Ascent of Man

The Conquest of Civilization, by James Henry Breasted. New York: Harper and Brothers. 681 pages. $4.

THERE ARE very few textbooks so full of life that they graduate from high school into college, and from college into the world outside. That is roughly the story of James Henry Breasted's "The Conquest of Civilization." It was published in 1916 as a school text; the original title was "Ancient Times." In 1926 it was revised and reissued under its present title, in an edition for general readers that still had the textbook smell to it. Now, in 1938, it appears once more, with the additions that Breasted made before his death in 1936 and with further revisions by a capable assistant, Dr. Edith Williams Ware. Textually and typographically it is now designed for the wider audience that it deserved to reach from the beginning. It is the best popular summary of life in the ancient world.

Partly that is the result of Breasted's eminence in archeology, in Egyptology, in Assyriology and all the ologies and ographies that have to do with the kingdoms once clustering around the eastern end of the Mediterranean. It was only in Egyptian history that he ranked above his colleagues. But more than the others he had a sense of the oriental nations as a whole—of the interactions and interconnections that bound together Egypt, Crete, the Aramean cities, the Hittite empire, Assyria and Babylonia; with Egyptian art works and beauty lotions carried north to be exchanged for Hittite iron and horses from Mitanni. From 1600 to 1200 B.C., the eastern Mediterranean formed a cultural organism almost like modern Europe—and I doubt that any other historian writing for the public at large has given the same importance to the period or managed to convey its essential unity.

More than 250 pages are devoted to this earlier Mediterranean world, which the textbooks used to race through in two chapters with a total reading time of seventeen minutes flat. In the rest of the book, dealing with Greece and Rome, Breasted had no special knowledge to distinguish him from other historians, but he did have and display a special gift for story-telling. He would have made a good novelist and a splendid biographer. He had a gift for depicting great men in terms of their ultimate ambitions, and for presenting the conflict between their dreams and the reality that refused to be remolded: there is drama in his treatment of Ikhnaton, the pharaoh who tried to impose a new religion, and in his chapter on Alexander the Great. He had, moreover, an instinct for choosing the right details and an absolute passion for making himself understood. And his work from beginning to end is bound together by a single conception, that of the "unconquerable buoyancy of the human soul." Breasted thought that man's struggles had carried him always forward along a "rising trail"; those are the last words in his book.

But although this conception of progress as a vital instinct gives unity and force to Breasted's narrative, it also leads to certain deformations of the past. For example, it makes him exaggerate the debts owed by one civilization to another. To say that similar customs appeared in Greece and Egypt is not the same as proving that the Greeks got

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them from the Egyptians. The customs may have developed independently in the two cultures—a possibility to which Breasted would have given more weight had he not been obsessed by the idea of progress in a continuous line. That same idea caused him to imply that the present is necessarily better than the past—in other words, that the ideals of a Christian business man in the Middle West are higher than those of an Egyptian merchant. The result was a sort of Illinois provincialism both in economics and religion. Finally, Breasted hated to discuss the periods of retrogression that, in the ancient world, were almost as important as the periods of progress. He gave only a few pages to the six centuries of darkness after 1200 B.C.; and his account of the Roman empire during the civil wars and barbarian invasion is almost the only passage in his book that is dull and uninspired. Today we are threatened with another such period and want to know how it can be averted; but on that subject Breasted throws no light. In his faults as in his virtues, he belonged to an earlier age in America, one that could judge the past with assurance because it felt certain of the future.

MALCOLM COWLEY

The Natural History of the Intellectual

The Specter, by Maxim Gorky, New York: D. Appleton-Century Company. $3.50.

"THE SPECTER" concludes the extraordinary tetralogy of novels called "The Life of Clim Samghin," upon which Gorky was at work until his unexpected death two years ago. Lacking the author's final revisions, this volume has been edited by those in charge of the Gorky estate and translated for American readers by Alexander Bakshy. As the other novels in the series ("The Bystander," "The Magnet," "Other Fires") have already been made available, the importance of Gorky's major work need no longer be a matter for our conjecture—it is now evident to all who can read Mr. Bakshy's English.

To say that Gorky has written a Marxist novel or a classic of socialist realism might be the occasion for a misconception, for this great work is something very different from the artless didactic fiction such terms might suggest. I can do no more than indicate its unusual outlines. "The Life of Clim Samghin" is at once a social history, a story of an individual human being, and also (without a trace of naïve tendentiousness or propaganda) a *critique* of a social epoch and a human being in their interactions and alterations. In short, Gorky has applied to literature the method of dialectical materialism, a method which assumes a social reality always changing—never *fixed*, as is, for example, the environment in which Stephen Dedalus or the hero of Mann's "Magic Mountain" is exhibited.

Gorky did not have to invent this changing social reality; history anticipated him, most obviously in the early years of the twentieth century, the years of Gorky's own life, in Russia; and accordingly one phase of this work is a record of those years. Real historical personages appear, such as Leonid Andreyev, Martov, Lenin; real incidents make up the body of the action. Strictly speaking, there is nothing invented in the work, and it may be objected with some justice that Gorky has reduced the novelist's imaginative contribution quantitatively to the amount used by a logician in selecting examples for his syllogisms. On the other hand, it is also true that there is nothing in the work that Gorky has *not* invented, and that the whole constitutes an imaginative creation of extreme coherence, as far from the commonplace historical romance as it is from the commonplace historical document.

Stylistically Gorky's tetralogy discovers no novelties; the usual three means of expression—monologue, dialogue and exposition—appear here as they appear in Dickens or Dostoevsky. In this respect Gorky remains within the tradition of the novel as we know it. But in his use of these techniques of expression Gorky departs from the customary—not by an exaggeration of *one* of the techniques (as monologue by Proust or dialogue by Hemingway), but rather by making them correspond to the three planes or aspects of the changing social reality observable by the method of dialectics. Thus, he uses the monologue to elucidate the individual Clim Samghin; dialogue, for Clim Samghin in relation to his society; narrative exposition, for conveying historical alteration in time; and all three for the peculiar *critique* which is the essence of Gorky's style. A further element enters into this style. Clim Samghin in his inner reflections and conversations has a habit of extensive quotation "as though his personal, living experience had been formulated in the words of others." By means of these innumerable quotations Gorky conveys the fourth factor which operates within a changing social reality—that which Engels called "the inertia force of history": Tradition.

By this method and with these means "The Life of Clim Samghin" is written. And now—what is it all about?

"Bystander," the title of the first book in the series, provides, like Joyce's "Ulysses," the clue to the entire work. Formally "The Life of Clim Samghin" is the biography of a man born at the close of the nineteenth century into a Russian petty-bourgeois family. As Clim Samghin grows up he finds no values within his own class which he can respect; he vacillates with his class between the upper and lower forces of society—*on the one hand* and *on the other hand;* he develops in consequence a hypertrophied faculty for theory together with an atrophied faculty for practice; he understands everything and can do nothing; he therefore finally conceives himself as being a unique individual, "the focus of all science and art, inviolate by either capital or labor."

Again Gorky is apparently in keeping with tradition, for, except for national accidents, this description of Clim would equally describe the tragic hero of Hamsun, or Joyce, or Wells, or Mann. In fact Clim's characteristics have become so widely known and familiar that it has become possible for even a psychoanalyst to define him; and Herr Jung has done so as "the man whom we can with justice call Modern." And it is precisely this Jungian Modern Man,

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this ubiquitous tragic hero of modern fiction, the Faust-Hamlet of our day, that Gorky selects, paradoxically enough, as the protagonist of his Marxist novel. "An in-tell-ect-ual," he termed himself respectfully, in his mind. "A new force in history, a force yet insufficiently impressed with its own importance and direction." If formally Gorky's tetralogy is a biography of an individual Russian man, personalized with a wealth of detail, in content it is a repository, the fullest in literature, of the habits, psychology and behavior of that egregious product of the middle class, the *intellectual.*

But Gorky's realism does not permit him to stop here. In pursuing his theme he carries the novel so far beyond the fictions of other writers as almost to empty the term "novel" of all meaning. Gorky does more than depict a typical modern intellectual in relation to his times; after all, Proust, Joyce, Mann and other writers have done as much; Gorky continues to penetrate his material until this social cell gives up its secret in its inevitable historical conclusion, until "The Life of Clim Samghin" becomes the criticism of itself and of all similar lives. Through the four books the same theme is relentlessly pursued: the man and his society; the man changing within a changing society, being changed by it and changing it in his turn; and the criticism of the totality (according to the method of dialectical materialism) by the reflection of the changes in the consciousness of the man. That is not to say that there are no other characters in the work; there is a multitude of them, and a multitude of actions to reveal them; but it is through the endlessly pervasive and receptive, amœboid-like personality of the Intellectual, of Clim Samghin, the Bystander, that Gorky records the forces and contradictions in early twentieth-century Russia which came to a head in the rout of the Tsar's troops by the German army and the October Revolution.

The three earlier volumes have brought the history up to the defeat of the Moscow uprising of 1905. This final volume, "The Specter," opens in the period of the consequent reaction led by Stolypin. The intellectuals are scurrying into exile, suicide, mysticism, eroticism, anti-Semitism; the working-class movement has been driven underground; the peasant land-communes are being broken up and the free peasants are being converted into the wage slaves of French and English capital—for Russian industry has been almost completely penetrated by foreign capital. In literature, the fervor of a Dostoevsky, the messianism of a Tolstoy are degenerating into the fever of a Rozanov, the "profligate verbiage" of a Merezhkovsky; bankruptcy, cynicism, despair on every hand—and Clim: "What he could not, or did not wish to do, or possibly feared to do, was to discover the innate meaning of facts, to investigate their basic unity."

Clim reconciles himself to the suicide, murder and psychological collapse of his associates with the reflection: "The truth lies with those who believe that reality deprives man of his individuality, and violates him. . . . How can I act, or to put it more accurately, do I want to act on my environment except to defend myself against its restraining and malevolent influence?" With the sharpening of the social contradictions, with the emergence of these contradictions into sharper social struggles—when Clim begins to detect "the note of fear of social revolution in the voices

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of people"—he decides that the motive force of history "was certainly not classes or blind crowds; it was the individual, the hero." But as no hero materializes (Il Duce and Der Führer had not yet been invented), Clim presently comes to feel that his experience of life is a burden . . . "in spite of the abundance of events, his life was tiresome. He longed for disaster, the sounding of the alarm, to terrify people, push them, throw them violently into a different mood. He longed for an end to the indefinite. . . ."

Gorky makes no comment upon Clim Samghin's reflections; as we have noted already, the criticism is implicit in the biography—the life is its own criticism; and no comment could more clearly express that lust for catastrophe which is the key to the whole dissonance of a character who, though appalled at the brutality of his times, can yet accept it, and will cry for *anything* "to put an end to the indefinite." Stroke by stroke the *critique* of Gorky's style exposes the social secret of this "unique individual," this hero of modern fiction; and his personal tragedy is revealed as the hopeless dilemma of a *class*.

Gorky offers no consolation; his novel is a work of art in the traditional sense, and includes no obvious moral. The concluding chapter of "The Specter" was never completed; but from the vivid notes which Gorky left, and which are supplied as an appendix to this novel, it is clear that he conceived the death of Clim Samghin as coinciding with the arrival of Lenin—not as a matter of propaganda, but much in the same way that Shakespeare makes Hamlet's death coincide with the arrival of Fortinbras. A consummation, of course, in keeping with the Marxist dialectic and its "negation of the negation." Clim had felt Lenin to be a *personal* enemy; and in so far as Lenin embodied in his person the unity of theory and practice he does negate the type of intellectual that "knows" all the theories and acts on none of them.

MICHAEL SAYERS

Business and Government

The Promises Men Live By, by Harry Scherman. New York: Random House. 492 pages. $3.

THE SIGNIFICANT CONTENT of this lengthy book can be summarized very briefly. Economic activity is effected chiefly by means of credit relations. These credit relations are "promises" to fulfill in the future the last half of exchanges which are made in the present. Promises made by individuals and by business firms are almost always fulfilled. Governments, on the other hand, are notoriously unfaithful in these important matters. We use promises, in the form of bank deposits, as money. The value of money (notes and deposits) depends on the government's readiness to convert paper money into "real money," *i.e.*, gold, at a constant ratio. But governments can rarely be counted on to do so and their unfaithfulness is the basic weakness in our whole system of credit relations. The devaluation of our dollar in 1933 was an unscrupulous act of this sort and set up waves of disturbance that spread throughout the economic system. A government fails to fulfill its promises when it borrows too heavily and is unable to seize (tax) enough wealth to meet its obligations. The business cycle is nothing but a variation in the volume of "promises." Social reform depends on education. People must learn that

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tariffs and monopolies block exchanges (and thus reduce welfare), that completion of private promises is the bedrock of the system and that their immediate enemies are their governments. This last because "government . . . is the one area of human activity that constitutes the last real stronghold of scoundrelism in human nature."

Anyone who is at all informed about economic life will not be surprised by the statement that we live by promises. Mr. Scherman's "loose end of truth" explains nothing —it calls our old friend "debt" by a different name. As to the reliability of private debtors, the real indictment of our system is that we have a chronic under-utilization of human and physical resources, and this basic criticism is very slightly if at all affected by Mr. Scherman's pointing out that the bad-debt ratio is very small.

One of the most unsatisfactory parts of the whole book is that which purports to explain the business cycle. The role of debt in the cycle has been dealt with *in extenso* by Thorstein Veblen and R. G. Hawtrey, to mention only two names, and this book says nothing that they have not said. What is more, Mr. Scherman's version lacks the breadth of treatment that these writers have attained. I believe that the author's limited analytical concept, the "promise," would break down promptly if he once tried to *explain* the turning point from expansion to contraction. This would immediately involve him in other than monetary considerations.

An interesting characteristic of the author's approach is the rather common one of distinguishing between two spheres of society. One is business, the other is government. The former is, on the whole, good, honest, reliable; the latter is faithless and unscrupulous. The institutional overlapping of business and government is apparently an entirely alien idea. Nor is the non-fulfilment of government debt, which in our history has followed from war and a collapse of the private debt structure, traced to the right factors. Instead of explaining this in terms of the working of our kind of economic system, the explanation runs constantly in terms of unreliability, dishonesty and fraud. This is a thoroughly superficial view but it will doubtless recommend itself to those people who find the source of the basic ills of society in the unscrupulous "politico."

RAYMOND J. SAULNIER

New Books: A Reader's List

PEACE TOUR, by Rolph Malloch (Covici, Friede, $2). A few years ago two high-school teachers, one mother, a handful of boys and girls and a fake internationalist went to Japan to "promote good fellowship and peace in the Pacific." This book hilariously relates what the students actually accomplished—the transition from childhood to adolescence.

JACOB A. RIIS, by Louise Ware (Appleton-Century, $3). A well documented biography of New York's "most useful citizen," setting the personal influence and achievement of Jacob Riis against the background of the muckraking era.

THE LAW AND MR. SMITH, by Max Radin (Bobbs-Merrill, $3). A readable account, for the layman, of the growth and necessity of laws in organized society. Presents clearly and with fascinating detail such points as the relation of custom to legality, the development of legal pro-

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POLITICS OF CENTRAL EUROPE, under leadership of **Robert Heckert**, just back from a year in Central Europe. A timely first-hand study of the issues in Germany, Austria, Hungary and Czechoslovakia. Sailing July 7. Back August 27.

ITALY, TURKEY, SOVIET UNION & GERMANY, under leadership of **Prof. Godwin Watson.** A contrasting study of the psychology of social change. Sailing June 29. Back September 4.

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THE SOVIET UNION AND ITS DRAMATIC ARTS, under leadership of **Norris Houghton**, author of "Moscow Rehearsals." A month of metropolitan and folk theatre in **Leningrad, Moscow, the Caucasus, Soviet Armenia** and the **Crimea.** Sailing June 8. Back July 30.

MEXICO IN PROGRESS, under leadership of **Julien Bryan.** More than a month in the cites and native villages. Sailing July 14. Back August 23.

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cedure, the place of "interpretation" and the relation of the courts to property. Particularly fine chapter on crime and punishment.

CHINA FIGHTS FOR HER LIFE, by H. R. Ekins and Theon Wright (Whittlesey House, $2.75). A vivid account of the torn and turbulent China behind today's headlines. Chiang Kai-shek emerges as a cool, ambitious politician with some military talent—a man owing most of his present greatness to his wife's broader vision and to the pressure of the masses and the Communist Party. Makes Far Eastern affairs intelligible to a beginner.

DIDEROT, INTERPRETER OF NATURE: Selected Writings, translated by Jean Stewart and Jonathan Kemp (International, $2.50). An excellent, carefully annotated anthology containing the most representative philosophic writings of the most encyclopedic of the Encyclopedists. It also includes the full text of "Rameau's Nephew," a novel whose hero is the true ancester of all "lost generations."

MALESHERBES, DEFENDER AND REFORMER OF THE FRENCH MONARCHY, by John M. S. Allison (Yale, $2.50). A well documented biography of a liberal lawyer who clung to his moderate reformist ideas after the French Revolution had carried them much farther. Malesherbes defended Louis XVI before the Convention and was guillotined in 1794, at the respectable age of seventy-three.

WORLD BRAIN, by H. G. Wells (Doubleday, Doran, $2.) A brilliant scheme to embody all existing knowledge in a World Encyclopedia and permanent institution. Providing a kind of super-reference library for the World's Rulers. Admirable plan, but will it happen?

DAUGHTERS AND SONS, by I. Compton-Burnett (Norton, $2.50). Drawing-room novel of an English family at whose head is a cultivated Lady Macbeth, aged eighty-four. Written almost entirely in the form of dialogue, crisp, biting, highly stylized.

IN THE FINE SUMMER WEATHER, by Catherine Whitcomb (Random House, $2). One turbulent day in the lives of three couples summering in New Hampshire. Nothing is solved. But the strained, frustrated moods between ill suited married people are beautifully and movingly evoked.

LOST SPRINGTIME, by Julian Dana (Macmillan, $2.50). Two gentlemen and a dog on a mountain vacation, part whimsy, part scenery, part small talk. Sandwiched between is a flashback to the California of frontier days, told with diverting emphasis on the quaintness and sentimentality of a rowdy mining town.

THE TRUTH ABOUT CHILDBIRTH, by Anthony M. Ludovici (Dutton, $2.50). Theory and statistics to support the author's thesis that childbirth should be a pleasure. Mr. Ludovici claims that civilization and its attendant fear-complexes cause painful deliveries, and recommends youth, careful mating and diet.

A Correction

In The New Republic's supplement on National Defense (March 30) through a typographical error the seriousness of the erosion problem was much understated. The annual loss of topsoil, described as "more than three million tons a year," should have been "more than three billion tons." The corresponding figure for the Mississippi Valley should have been 2,300,000,000 tons.

Contributors

GEORGE FIELDING ELIOT was an infantry officer with the British forces in the World War and a Captain and Major in the United States Military Intelligence Reserve between 1922 and 1930. He is a lecturer and military critic, and the co-author, with R. Ernest Dupuy, of "If War Comes."

FRANKLIN P. ADAMS has been a newspaperman since 1903. "The Conning Tower," his daily column, was known throughout the English-speaking world.

ROBERT MCROBERTS is a young Pittsburgher. His first published article "Time . . . Marches OFF," appeared last spring in The New Republic.

JOHN CHAMBERLAIN, who made the daily book review page of The New York Times a highlight of the paper, is now an editor of Fortune and a regular contributor to Scribner's.

MICHAEL SAYERS' short stories have appeared in O'Brien's "Best British Stories" and he has contributed dramatic criticisms to The New Masses. He was play editor for Norman Bel Geddes.

RAYMOND J. SAULNIER, an instructor in Economics at Columbia University, is the author of a volume on "Contemporary Monetary Theories" which will be published in the near future.

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